The Bookman.

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

The December Bookman will, as usual, be a Special Christmas Number, and the price will be 2s. 6d. net. It will be a handsome volume of over two hundred pages and, in addition to the regular monthly features, will contain plates in colour and black-and-white by well-known artists; a series of presentation plate portraits in photogravure of soldier-authors who have fallen in the war, including Rupert Brooke, Dixon Scott, Edward Thomas, Donald Hankey, William Redmond, Francis Ledwidge and Julian Grenfell; and four fully-illustrated Supplements dealing with books of the season. Among the special articles in this Number will be "For Remembrance: Soldier-Poets who have Fallen in the War," by A. St. John Adcock, illustrated with portraits; "On Reading Horace," by Dr. William Barry; "Roden Noel," by S. M. Ellis, illustrated with some hitherto unpublished portraits, etc.; "Edward Thomas," by John Freeman; "Turgenev," by George Sampson; "The Happy Motorist," by D. S. Meldrum; "The Making of Man," by Katharine Tynan; "Great James," by R. Ellis Roberts; Bookman Gallery articles on Frank Swinnerton by C. S. Evans, and Beach Thomas by David Hodge, etc., etc. Orders for the Christmas Number of The Bookman should be placed immediately; the advance orders have already exhausted more than three-fourths of the edition, and after publication the Number cannot be reprinted.

All lovers of Mr. Edmund Gosse's delightful prose will welcome the new pocket-sized edition of his romance, "The Secret of Narcisse," which Mr. Heinemann has just published at 2s. 6d. net. The first edition was printed in 1892.

It is interesting to learn that, as some of us have suspected, Miss E. M. Delafield, whose brilliant first novel, "Zella Sees Herself," was published last spring by Mr. Heinemann, is the daughter of Mrs. de la Pasture, masked in a half translated name. She has completed a new novel, "The Pelicans," which Mr. Heinemann will publish early next year.

Miss May Wynne, whose new romance of that famous King of Gipsies, Bamfylde Moore Carew, "The Gipsy King," was published last month by

Miss May Wynne.

Messrs. Chapman & Hall, had written several stories before she made her first real success with "Henry of Navarre," which was published by Messrs. Greening. She is engaged at present on a new historical romance which has King Stanislaus of Poland for its hero. Like so many of our novelists, Miss Wynne has been devoting herself to war work, and has been serving as Matron of a Canadian Military Hospital.

We are pleased to hear that a second book of Dixon Scott's essays will be published before Christmas by Mr. T. N. Foulis. They have been collected by Mr. Bertram Smith and are more miscellaneous in character than those contained in his admirable "Men of Letters." Some of Dixon Scott's best work was in his nature studies; he had an exquisite feeling for the beauty of earth and sky, the mystery of wind and rain and all the wonder of day and darkness. Studies in this kind, and thoughtful or whimsical essays on matters of everyday interest make up the new volume, which is to be called "A Number of Things."

"An Airman's Outings," the brilliant series of stories in the life of a flying man at the front, by "Contact," which has been appearing in *Blackwood's Magazine*, has been published in book form by Messrs. Blackwood. "Contact," who is now a very efficient member of the Flying Corps, was a Fleet Street journalist before the war.

Miss Marjorie Benton Cooke, author of those two delightful stories, "Bambi" and "The Girl Who Lived in the Woods," has written a new novel of Bohemian life in the Artists' Colony of New York. She is calling it "Cinderella Jane," and Messrs. Jarrold are publishing it immediately.

Messrs. Arrowsmith are publishing "Mortallone and Aunt Trinidad," a new volume of short stories by Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, a series of tales of the Spanish Main.

The King has been pleased to accept a copy of "The Wonder Book of the Navy," the latest addition to Messrs. Ward, Lock's "Wonder Books," which are again among the popular Christmas gift books for younger readers.

"The Night Club," Mr. Herbert Jenkins's new story of his own delectable "Bindle," is to be published immediately by Messrs. Herbert Jenkins Limited. The same firm is publishing shortly "The Tenth (Irish) Division in Gallipoli," by Major Bryan Cooper, to which Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Sir Edward Carson and Mr. John Redmond have contributed appreciations.

We congratulate Messrs. Herbert Jenkins, by the way, on the fact that their rapidly increasing business has necessitated their removal from the Haymarket to larger premises, comprising the entire building of seven floors, at 3, York Street, St. James's, S.W.1, where all communications for them should henceforth be addressed.

Captain Desmond Coke,
whose play, "One Hour of Life," is now being produced at the Kingsway Theatre.
From a silhouette by Handrup.

Mr. Erskine Macdonald has in preparation a second volume of "Soldier Poets," containing hitherto unpublished poems by men who are or have been on active service. The first volume has had an unusually large sale both here and in America.

Miss Peggy Webling is publishing immediately "Guests of the Heart," a little Christmas book of quiet stories that touch on those hopes, sorrows, dreams, problems and perplexities which enter into the lives of every man and every woman. In this case, as in the case of her brochure on Ruskin a few years ago, she will publish the book at 2s. 6d. post free from her own address, 124, The Grove, W.6. She has just completed a new novel, "In Our Street," which will be published by Messrs. Hutchinson early next spring.

Mr. A. A. Milne,
whose new book, "Once Upon a Time," Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton are publishing.

Messrs. Nimmo have added to their admirable "Clyde Classics" Series (1s. 3d. net), a reissue of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's famous story, "The Gates Ajar," revised and somewhat condensed by Frederick Hastings.

Miss Isobel W. Hutchison, whose new volume of poetry, "How Joy Was Found" (Blackie) is reviewed on another page, belongs to that fair West Lothian land which inspired many charming lyrics in a little book of verse she published last year in aid of the Red Cross Fund. Her father was the late Tom Hutchison, of Carlowrie, Kirkliston; her mother is a cousin of Sir George Younger, Unionist M.P. for Ayr Burghs since 1906, and of Sir Robert Younger, the eminent High Court judge. Her book is interesting bibliographically from the rather surprising fact that, except for Miss Florence Harrison's books of verse for children, "How Joy Was Found" is the first volume of original poetry published by Messrs. Blackie & Son since they issued the complete works of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, in the 'thirties or 'forties of last century.

Mr. W. Hope Hodgson,
whose new novel, "Captain Gault" (Eveleigh Nash), is reviewed in this Number.

Mr. J. S. Fletcher, whose new novel, "Malvery Hold," has just been published by Messrs. Ward, Lock, is a Yorkshireman, born at Halifax in 1863, the son of the late Rev. John Fletcher. From 1890 to 1900 he was assistant leader writer on the

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. J. S. Fletcher.**

Leeds Mercury, and during the same period acted as special commissioner for his paper on Workhouse and Poor Law Administration, and on the Land Question, and for the *Leeds Daily News*, in 1902, on the Great Coal Strike, when he was present at the Featherstone Riots. He was also the *Yorkshire Post's* special commissioner at King Edward's Coronation in 1902. Already, in those days, he had started his career as an author; his "When Charles the First Was King" appeared in 1892, and in the years since then he has written a long series of novels of Yorkshire life, such as "The Paths of the Prudent," "Grand Relations," "Both of This Parish," "Perris of the Cherry Trees"; and a long series of successful novels of mystery and sensation. His best work is in the stories of Yorkshire, and in his many historical and topographical books. His "Picturesque History of Yorkshire," in three volumes, has gone through several editions; "The Enchanting North" has sold over ten thousand copies; and he has two new books in this kind about to be issued: "Memorials of a Yorkshire Parish," which Mr. John Lane is publishing this month, and "The Making of Modern Yorkshire," which Messrs. Allen & Unwin have in the press. He is at present engaged on two other important works dealing with Yorkshire history, "Annals of a Yorkshire Castle" and "The Reformation in Yorkshire, 1530–1570." Several of Mr. Fletcher's novels have been translated into French, Spanish, Dutch, German and Norwegian. In 1914 he made an experiment in Yorkshire dialect verse and wrote "Leet Livvy," a dramatic narrative poem which was praised by literary critics for its fine poetical qualities, and by Professor Moorman, the leading authority on Yorkshire dialects, as "the most ambitious piece of work that had yet appeared in the Yorkshire vernacular." Incidentally, with the numerous articles he has contributed to magazines and newspapers on old country life and rural character, Mr. Fletcher has won a second reputation for himself under the pseudonym of "A Son of the Soil." He is a keen sportsman, a great collector of books relating to Yorkshire history, topography and antiquities, and a member of both the Yorkshire and the Sussex Archæological Societies; all his heart is still in his native county, though he has been living for some years past in a quiet corner of the Sussex Downs.

Miss Marjorie Benton Cooke,
whose new book, "Cinderella Jane," Messrs. Jarrold are publishing this month.

"An Uncensored Diary," by E. D. Bullitt, will be published this month by Messrs. Stanley Paul & Co. It is a record of the author's experiences in Germany, Belgium, Austria and Hungary, in 1916, while accompanying her husband who was serving as special correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*.

Messrs. Chatto & Windus, who have just issued G. K. Chesterton's "Short History of England," are publishing a war novel, entitled "The Coming," by J. C. Snaith, and Lieutenant Keith Henderson's "Letters to Helen: The Impressions of an Artist on the Western Front," fully illustrated in colour.

A remarkable romance of Restoration days, "My Two Kings," by Mrs. Evan Nepean, is announced by Mr. Andrew Melrose. Mrs. Nepean claims, in all seriousness, to be a reincarnation of the seventeenth century lady, Charlotte Stuart, who is the principal woman character of her story.

In our article last month on "Some Russian Novelists" reference should have been made to the books by Tolstoy published by the Oxford University Press in their World's Classics series at 1s. or (war-time-price) 1s. 3d. net. These include Tolstoy's "Essays and Letters"; his "Twenty-Three Tales," "The Cossacks" and "Resurrection." "Anna Karenina" is now in the press in the same series. All these are in the excellent translations of Louise and Aylmer Maude. When Tolstoy saw the earlier of these volumes he warmly approved of them, writing "the edition is very good," and expressed his surprise that the work could be done so well at so cheap a price. "Tolstoy's own wish is being complied with," says Mr. Aylmer Maude, "by producing the translation first in a very cheap edition, without sacrificing the quality of the versions. To reprint it then in library form would present no great difficulty. If the public see fit to support it sufficiently, a national translation of Tolstoy, such as Mr. Sampson asks for, will be provided at no distant date."

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

THIS appreciation owes its origin to an episode of years ago that still rings down the dim aisles of the narrator's memory. It is the experience of an eager-souled youngster wandering in that House of Wonders known, to those who love it best, as the Galloway Hills. To that youth the gods sent as guide into the realms of Pan a sweet-natured, tiny, ancient man—too old for the toil of the fields—and therefore entrusted with the herding of the flocks. I can call him to mind now, a quaint figure in a nondescript suit, brown as the burnt heather where he stood. Yet, when you looked into the splendour of his blue eyes, still and deep as the waters of a mountain tarn, you forgot the oddness of his physical presence. You were under the spell of the natural seer. He was no scholar, as the world counts learning, but his wisdom was as profound as the sea, in the things that appertained to the Spirit. The earth and sky to him were the playground of invisible presences whom he had learned to regard as more real than the external things of life. It was he who first spelt out for this lad those secrets of inanimate nature which reveal themselves in the elemental forces of wind and fire, and who first implanted that desire for communion with Nature which the spirit, athirst for Beauty, experiences in its frequent moments of ennui, that spiritual wanderlust which Novalis expresses in the words:

"Very remarkable it is that through this play of his personality man first becomes aware of his specific freedom, and that it seems to him as though he had awaked out of a deep sleep, as though he were only now at home in the world. The substance of these impressions which affect us, we call Nature, and thus Nature stands in an immediate relationship to those functions of our bodies which we call senses."

It was this same yearning that made Wordsworth cry out for something, even were it the imagination of a pagan, which would make him less forlorn—the conviction that it is only those hours when the mind is absorbed by beauty that are the hours when one really lives.

You can imagine, then, the elation with which, some years ago, I happened upon a writer who reopened up a pathway to that new mode of being, revealed to me in earlier days. It is hard to resist excesses of language in recording that discovery, and I must avoid them. Algernon Blackwood would much deprecate praise in this connection. His simple claim would be that he was a humble explorer in the fields of mysticism, who has but attempted to translate into understandable terms the researches of such well-known explorers in this field as Fechner, Jacob Boehme, Plotinus, Freud, Novalis, Ruysbroeck and Emerson.

Incidentally it is curious to note that the search for this mode of approaching the hidden spirituality that lurks behind phenomena, has not been confined to the mystics. Ibsen and Maeterlinck, choosing another medium years ago, concerned themselves with the "interior Drama," what some one has clumsily called "the dialogue of the second degree," in which, as Blackwood, in "The Centaur," has expressed it, "what takes place in the mind and heart become alone the true events: their outward expression in the shifting and impermanent shapes of matter becomes the least real thing in the world."

There is just a chance that much of what has been said about Algernon Blackwood, and what he has himself written, may be regarded as slightingly as the abracadabra of the vaudeville magician whose purpose is rather to impress with his cleverness than illuminate with the clarity of his vision. It is solely to those who believe that the imagination is not a state of consciousness but human existence itself, that his work comes as a refreshing gospel. Frankly speaking, it is to the poet that has died young in most of us that his constant appeal is made. For the human who does not class himself in that category I fear Mr. Blackwood's message will be regarded as wasted breath.

Photo by Histed. **Mr. Algernon Blackwood.**

But before that type of reader dismisses the subject so easily, I think he ought at least to be assured that Blackwood, the pantheist, is not a kid-gloved, lush-locked decadent—whose excursions in life have been limited to the amenities of the Café Royal. I know of no modern novelist whose experiences have been so far removed from poetical inspiration, or who has come to such close grips with the problem of living. Eleven years ago, when I first happened upon him, he had no

thought of his present destiny. To put it bluntly, he was in the dried-milk business, for what it was worth. His career before that may briefly be summarised.

Algernon Blackwood is the son of the late Sir Arthur Blackwood, and Sydney, Duchess of Manchester (widow of the sixth Duke). He is a nephew of that great-souled Irish gentleman, the late Marquis of Dufferin. To this Celtic strain may be traced a temperament which is displayed at its fullest in the picture of Terence O'Malley in "The Centaur." I referred to that book in a conversation with Mr. Blackwood, and to the irresistible spell it held over one reader—so much, indeed, that he had to lay down the volume very frequently, to escape its overpowering sway.

"That is the kind of effect I had hoped to achieve," he said quite simply. "Most writers hold their own test of the value of their readers. Kipling, I am told, regards his exquisite story 'They' as the touchstone of the reader whose approval he cherishes most—so when readers tell me they like 'The Centaur,' I know they have passed my test."

But I digress. The probability is—so modest was Mr. Blackwood about his own ability—that if Pinero's stepson, Angus Hamilton, had not at that period carried off some ghost stories out of a cupboard in Blackwood's lodging, and promptly placed them with a publisher, our author would still have been in business and as comfortably rich as his then partner has now become.

Mr. Blackwood's early years were spent with the Moravian Brotherhood in the Black Forest, a *locale* which he has used in "John Silence." Subsequently he was educated at Wellington College, completing his studies at the University of Edinburgh, whose hills and byways he has described intimately in "Julius Le Vallon." But beyond an editorial venture on a Methodist magazine, the path of literature in England did not attract. He was out for real adventures, and this led to his being given an immediate share of the Blackwood patrimony, when his passion for the open-air life drew him out to Canada. Arrived there, with the wisdom and confidence of a twenty-year-old, he picked up a partner, with whom he started a dairy farm near Toronto. That occupation failing to pay, the partnership was dissolved, and with what little was left, Blackwood bought up a discarded hotel which he ran in company with a young Oxford graduate. The hotel experiment ended badly—the two young men had come to the end of their resources, and then came, in the case of Blackwood, the experience to which he dates his initiation into the nature worship which is the dominating note of all his work:

> "We went out into the Canadian backwoods, and there, for six months, we lived in the heart of Nature—and there I began to realise that kinship of human beings which is more or less the message in all my books."

Enough money having arrived to attempt fresh adventures, he journeyed to New York to make a fight for existence. In that Poe-esque volume, "The Empty House," there is a story called "The Suspicious Gift," which affords an insight into the author's early struggles. Three of these dead-beats lived together—one of them, a Frenchman, an absinthe victim. Frequently the trio were so hungry they could not sleep, and on these occasions they used to buy dried apples and soak them in hot water, to produce that "full" feeling after eating which induces sleep. It was an exciting but sordid time. Often they had to wait till the Monday, when the pawnshop opened, to enable them to deposit a bit of clothing in order to buy food. To turn an honest cent, Blackwood went through such varied jobs as posing to artists like Dana Gibson, Cox and Zogbaum—teaching French and German to clerks, and giving tuition on the violin. Some free-lance translations of French stories for certain New York dailies led to his securing a post as reporter on the *Evening Sun*. There he saw the seamy side of New York life—as a police-court reporter whose tasks led him among blackmailers, police-protected people, and demanded attendances at the electrocution of various murderers.

But the work must have irked any clean-souled man, and when a gold strike was rumoured at the Rainy River gold-fields, Blackwood set out with a chum, only to find that placer machines were necessary to the exploit; lacking the funds to buy them, the two retraced their steps. He was lucky enough, on his return, to get placed on the *New York Times*, on the magazine page, and spent two years in congenial occupation. It was not till then that he attempted to write, and that at the urging of friends, but, his efforts having failed, he accepted the post of private secretary to Mr. James Speyer, of Speyer Brothers, with whom he returned to England.

Thus, crudely enough, are epitomised the leading incidents in Mr. Blackwood's career. It is just eleven years since accident placed him in the way of his destiny. Certain facile reviewers, out for labels, have dubbed him "the Sherlock Holmes of Ghostland" and "the super-psychic Sherlock Holmes." One need not trouble one's soul with these jejune epithets, based on a perfect misunderstanding of the author's work. Has not Yeats said that "the tree which moves some to tears of joy is, in the eyes of others, only a green thing standing in the way"? Besides, Blackwood seeks no converts. The Dedication to one of his books reads significantly: "To Those Who Hear." The message of his books, despite various attempts to link him up with the mystical horrors of Edgar Allan Poe, is to those of the elder race. It is the Ideal of an older time he holds—an ideal which may be expressed thus: In the beginning was feeling—not thought. The ancient mind did not crystallise into a hardened point, but, remaining fluid, knew that the mode of knowledge suitable to its nature was by intercourse and blending. Its experience was that it could blend with intelligence greater than itself—that it could have intercourse with the gods.

Mr. Blackwood's greatest attempt at stating the faith he holds is contained in that much misunderstood story of his, "Julius Le Vallon," which devotes itself to a daring exposition of the theme of re-birth. As to its purport I may be permitted to adumbrate somewhat of the ideas that Blackwood has set himself to interpret. In remote times Humanity lived so close to Nature that the elemental activities of Nature were actually shared by them. Nature worship was the communicating chord which the Invisible Brain and reason had not developed. Men *felt* rather than thought. They read Nature like a written script. By *feeling with* the elemental powers they could even share those powers.

Such powers might then be regarded as gods. And in the Nature worship of that day they evoked these gods and shared their strength and beauty.

To those who have not made acquaintance with the Blackwood books, perhaps, in naming "Julius Le Vallon," I am doing its author an injustice in counselling that this should be their first adventure into the realms of the Unknown. There are fifteen others. Each is alive with a tense spirituality. For Blackwood the true Shekinah is the soul of man, and in pursuit of his subject (his whole material possessions contained in three trunks) he has wandered throughout Europe, the pantheist pilgrim visiting every possible shrine where Beauty might be. For "The Wave," his latest volume, Egypt became his resting-place; the idea of that book of strange wonders, "The Centaur," came to him in the Caucasus Mountains; "A Prisoner in Fairyland," with all the madness of its dreams and the wild largeness of its outlook, was born in the Alps; "Pan's Garden," that eerie collection of nature stories, was evolved in the Jura Mountains, to which he again returned in the rushing splendour of "The Human Chord." I have already spoken of "John Silence," which owes its atmosphere to his sojourn in the Black Forest, but I have left no space to speak of those wondrously beautiful books in which he guides us adults, tiptoeing fearfully through those realms sacred to the hearts of children, such as "Jimbo" and "The Extra Day."

The ordinary mystic is well content if his vision may conjure up from the dim shadowland that lies at the Back of Beyond, the pale, ineffectual ghosts of yesterday—ineffectual shapes for ever pathetically dumb. There are no vaguely moving shadows in the realms of Blackwood's world—his transcendent imagination rising to the *n*th sense invests his characters with the contours of living beings. For, above all, he is a practical mystic with a message for this generation. Arnold Bocklin, the Swiss painter, had the same vivid, uncanny imagination, and had these two met I do not doubt they would have joined hands and, wandering together in that ancient Garden of the World-Soul, have evolved together some immortal work, whose purpose would have been to take away the ache of the World.

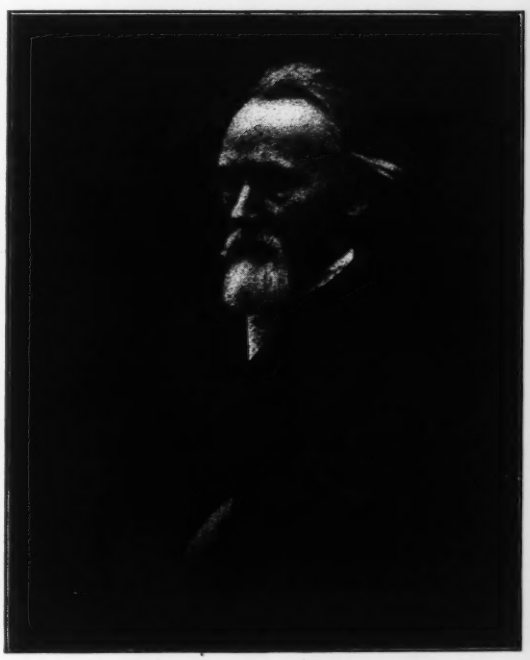
ROBB LAWSON.

JAMES PRIOR.

SMALL as it is in bulk, the work of Mr. James Prior is, in its quality and character, so high and individual that one may rightly call it unique. He has borrowed little or nothing from his fellows, evolving the fineness of his art out of the fineness of his nature. The evolution has been slow and laborious, but the result amply justifies the time and the labour.

James Prior was born sixty-six years ago at Nottingham. His father was a tradesman of that town, but country born and bred, and with a lingering love of the country, a diligent and serious reader, and a strict moralist who kept a firm but kindly hand on his children. "From my father," says Mr. Prior, "I got my love of reading and walking, and probably of writing, for he had a gravely exact way of expressing himself with his pen."

In his early days his passion for books was shepherded into safe and sober paths. Novels were forbidden. The most humanly interesting book at his command was "The Bible in Spain," admitted by virtue of its title, and upon Borrow's robust adventurousness his imagination fed itself. His introduction to Scott and Dickens came when he was about fifteen and brought a new joy into his life. Even now he cannot speak dispassionately about Dickens, so warm is his remembrance.



Mr. James Prior.

At school, I have it from one of his schoolfellows, he was brilliant. He himself says he was desultory and indolent. Of slight physique, he was yet very active, given to field sports and to long rambles in the country. In due time he was articled to a local solicitor, but his studies were chiefly in a more human literature than that of the law.

It was, I believe, Charles Lamb who led him into the treasure house of Elizabethan drama. If any influence has been strong and lasting in his art it is the large-minded, full-blooded influence of Marlowe and Shakespeare. Immediately under this influence he wrote, and in 1882 published a blank verse tragedy, "Don Pedro the Cruel." Reminiscent of Marlowe, it is yet no feeble and colourless imitation. It has a strong and stirring action, a fine utterance, and a firm handling of character. Only one reviewer condescended to notice it, but he was unhesitating in his praise. I seem to remember Mr. Prior saying that the public was good enough to take up one copy, and he made a "bonfire" in his garden of the rest.

The years that lie between this and the publication of "Ripple and Flood" (1897) were spent, one might say, experimentally. He wrote poems for his own delight, comedies for production

which could not get themselves produced, stories which did not get themselves published. In 1895 he published a novel which is not to be compared with his later achievements. With "Ripple and Flood" he rose at last to the full dignity of his art.

It is a story of the Trent; and he makes of his "beloved river" so vital a thing, such a thing of moods and power, that it seems to play an all-important part in the drama of the strange household of three dwelling on its banks. The picture of the Allius family, the stern, self-willed, jealous-minded uncle, the gentle, self-effacing, repentant father, the boy artist, who sees the world about him with the poetic vision of his creator, is perhaps the most intensely powerful thing Mr. Prior has done. More lightly limned, but in its way as masterly, is the portrait of the gipsy-maid, Ivy Sivil.

In one of the reviews was a prophecy that this book would live; but when, in 1901, "Forest Folk" was published, "Ripple and Flood" was apparently not only dead but forgotten. James Prior was now hailed as a new and powerful novelist whose future achievements were to be eagerly looked for. It has been Mr. Prior's strange fate to be so hailed every time he has had the temerity to publish a book. His critics, with one notable exception, have hesitated, as it were, on the very verge of discovery. Some of the qualities of "Forest Folk" were so plain as to be undeniable. The dramatic force, the racy humour, the virility, the fidelity, these were instantly admitted. What was less obtrusive, the easy mastery of language, the balance of characterisation, the tenderness, the spiritual delicacy, the poetic sense of landscape and of atmosphere, these were only hinted at by an occasional reviewer. One went so far as to say: "That which Blackmore has done for the Devonshire moors, that which Thomas Hardy has done for the vales of Wessex, that surely shall James Prior accomplish for Nottinghamshire." A safe prophecy, seeing that it was already practically fulfilled. If the wind had blown in the right direction "Forest Folk" might easily have taken the world by storm. It only achieved what the publishers call a "second impression."

"A Walking Gentleman" (1907) is to my mind Mr. Prior's finest performance. In it he has given free play to his own peculiar qualities. It is full of movement, of character, of humour robust and subtle, of the poetic sense, of spirituality. Intricately and inseparably interwoven—as they are in these pages—these things are the true stuff of life as we know it. But "A Walking Gentleman" has been called a "fantasia." To me it is a piece of virile yet delicate realism; it is what I imagine its author intended it to be, "a procession of life of extraordinary richness and variety." And the remarkable thing is that the central figure, the ever-present figure, in this vivid procession of life, Lord Beiley, is a man who has been robbed of life by the tragedy of his own inertia. He is not living, but merely existing, until in despair he drives himself out of the clinging mesh of habit into a world full of harsh and tender realities, eventually to discover the reality of himself and to become a man. It is a subtle theme worked out with infinite subtlety. Not humanity alone must play its part in the resurrection of Lord Beiley's "coddled-to-death" spirit. He must know the heat of the sun, the dreariness of the dark; winds must buffet and sting him, rains drench him, fire burn him; he must go through a veritable Odyssey of hard times, until he is brought so low that it seems a good exchange to give his last half-crown for a rope wherewith to rid himself of the trouble of existing. Then one morning the sun rises gloriously, and Beiley feels within himself a faint stirring of hope:

> "The sun was in the act of rising, he came up like a conqueror, resplendent, immediately predominant. The heavens were his forthwith, his the hedged fields, both the green and the yellow, his the crowded woods and the solitary hills. The only exception to the complete surrender was in the timid hesitation of the thin mists that cowered in the hollows and diaphanously veiled the still water, and of this pale denial he made a glory for himself. It would seem as if that penetrating sunshine had got within Lord Beiley . . . he was no longer downcast."

It was after reading "Fortuna Chance" (1910), Mr. Prior's last published work, that Mr. John Buchan, no mean judge, wrote to me: "I do not think there is any writer now living who is such a master of the English countryside. His peasants seem to me quite as good as Mr. Hardy's, and he has an astonishing power of producing impressions of scene and weather. Further, he is a true artist in the construction of his stories, and they seem to me to provide moments of finer drama than almost any modern novelist."

Those who consider this praise too high should turn to the book again and read deliberately and with understanding such chapters as "The Methodist," "Saturday Night," "The Cripple," "Ha Neil Sassenach," to name but one or two.

"Fortuna Chance" deals with a side-phase of the Jacobite rising. Like its predecessor, it is a tale of wanderings and tragic mishaps, but it is the accident of outside circumstance which impels Roland hither and thither with the "runners" on his track. The book is crowded with character, but so sharp and true is the method that a man may be introduced and dismissed in a single paragraph and yet leave behind a clear impress of his individuality. It reaches its height in the pages which tell of Roland and the wild highlanders fleeing across the hills and moors of Derbyshire, belated and separated from Prince Charlie's retreating army. The drama and its setting have a rugged realism of a rare poetic quality.

To watch the growth of one of Mr. Prior's books is a curious and valuable experience. He is very deliberate. Many things arising out of the exigencies of his life will conspire to thwart and delay him. He waits serenely on opportunity. His hours of actual writing are of necessity few, but his hours of thoughtful preparation are many. His themes are expansive, and in the course of their development gain much from the passing experiences of his life. He will go for a ramble and bring home a new character, a quaint saying, a fine atmospheric effect, a striking landscape. He is conscientious in small things; he will search and question diligently about a mere detail. He will travel miles afoot to verify his local colour. He refuses to be hurried. If his theme baffles him awhile, he lays it aside until there comes to him one of his favourite nights, a radiant night with soft clouds drifting across the path of the moon. Into such a night he will take his difficulty and return triumphant.

S. FISHER.

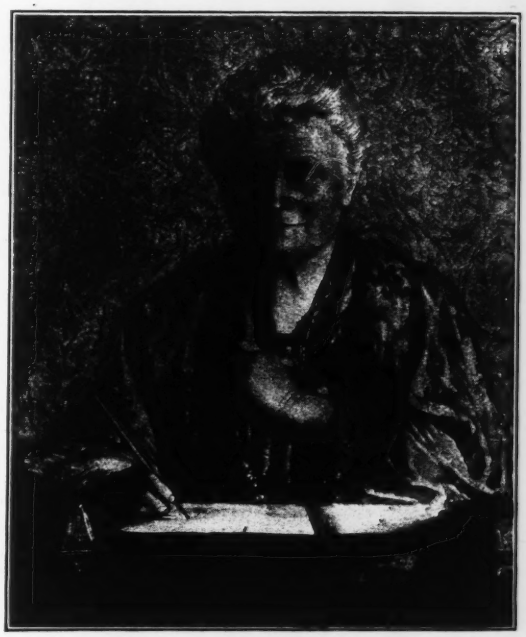
THE READER.

FLORA ANNIE STEEL.

By J. P. Collins.

TWENTY years ago, in spite of obvious exceptions, Sir Alfred Lyall disparaged Anglo-Indian fiction, and seemed to think it failed for two very different reasons. One was the immensity of the field that Indian life affords for our contemplation; the other, that we of the West are invariably in too much of a hurry. This view strikes one as inadequate, but it is easy to enter into the state of mind that harbours it. We may claim to have rescued India rather than invaded it, so far as administration is concerned; but we are still crude squatters on the shores of her psychology. Every one laughs at the bustling and well-intentioned British member in "John Bull's Other Island," who tackles the Celt and his bewildering problems much as if he were a peevish infant or a defective drain. But we are all apt to take ourselves seriously and play the complacent Broadbent, M.P., when we recall the part England has played in dealing with three hundred millions of human beings in that other world of twilight creeds and vast calamities that we call Asia. Now and again it falls to some cranky legislator on a back bench to question if these fellow-subjects of ours understand any code of progress, still less appreciate it; and the discussion thus awakened proceeds on such lines that if the earning of thanks was the motive of our activity, we might as well leave things alone. The saner course is to plod along like the weary Titan and let detraction or sedition bark as it will, and occasionally a war drifts by, to make the world thankful that providence has made us the instrument for saving India and her millions from the gripe of the Boche. Not that we are perfect by any means. Some day we shall attend to Lord Dufferin's complaint that we have over-indulged the tendency of young India to educate itself in the two professions that feed her worst instincts—politics and litigation—instead of developing her gifts of art and philosophy and song. As for that, we are but repeating in the East the error we have committed at home, with the result that we elect a dozen full-fledged orators to Westminster for one art student that we send to Rome and Paris. The same futility is observable with regard to our balance of interest in the Indian native: we train and maintain an expensive corps of officials for various departments of control over thirteen provinces and sixteen native states. They must needs be admirable fellows, seeing that they marry such splendid women; but we leave them little leisure or encouragement to try and enter the dark intricacies of the native mind. Now and then a Lyall or a Kipling succeeds in probing it, but this is because they have developed their intuition outside the circles of departmentalism. They have realised that it needs imagination to comprehend a fellow-creature who is not merely an allotment unit in a village, but a being of unearthly dreads and visions and indifferences who regards us across the gulf of "yesterday's seven thousand years."

This understanding, with whatsoever it implies, is what lifts Mrs. Flora Annie Steel out of the company of her peers, and the company of Anglo-Indian novelists to-day is a shining one, with many promising recruits. Nor does it lack variety, from the staid old "Blackwood" school or the sugared idylls of Mr. Bain to the irresponsible vein of those popular novelists of sentiment and adventure whose effusions supply irrepressible subalterns in far hill-stations with material for writing and acting their annual burlesques. On the principle that novels are bought chiefly for entertainment, no one will grudge large circulations to unintentional laughter-makers whose solemn passages are read aloud to each other by grateful memsahibs, much as one reads aloud in a communal way the jokes in *Punch*.



Mrs. Flora Annie Steel.

From the portrait by A. Bentley Connor, kindly lent by Mr. Heinemann for reproduction here and on our cover.

But it is not in this spirit that the novels of Mrs. Steel are read, or written either. Since the end of the 'eighties, when she emerged from probation, you may say, and gave us "The Potter's Thumb," the wonder has grown that a woman could have distilled so much of the real essence of India, and incidentally have led the novel-readers of her sex back to that discipline and energy of mind which seemed to have passed away with George Eliot. In her grip of character, her courage in tackling tough situations, her power of weaving history into the texture of a story, above all in her warm-hearted attitude towards an alien race, she cannot fail to remind attentive readers of the best work in "Romola" and

"Deronda." I had almost said "Middlemarch" as well, but it is better to seem ungrateful than be insincere, and I have never found any of Mrs. Steel's stories of English and Scottish life fascinate me like her romances of the East.

To take her short stories first is to challenge superlative comparison, and she has produced nothing quite so powerful as "Love o' Women," so vivid as "The Greatest Story in the World," so haunting as "They," or so racy as "My Lord the Elephant." She has not the range, the attack, the poetry, the white heat of Mr. Kipling; nor has she attained anything like his breadth and the certainty and magic of his style. But her perceptions are no less keen, her sympathies are more infectious, and she rarely or never jars our sensibilities. She has a delicious and good-natured irony that is rare in women, and Molière would not have disdained the ugly Punjabi in "Suttu" who nursed the comforting conviction that an enamoured fairy had determined to keep him to herself by preventing others from beholding him as he really was. Another flash that recurs to one is the remark in another book, that pious devotees in India nowadays count the third-class fares they incur on a pilgrimage as part of their offerings to the divinity, and shrines go short that railway dividends may swell. But this mention of travel and religion recalls perhaps the most distinctive thing that Mrs. Steel has written, and whenever there is a competition for the ten short stories of the world, there should always be a plumping vote for "In the Permanent Way." And that vivid fable of the fakir who planted himself on a railway track and won a martyr's crown in spite of the frantic and conscientious line inspector, is not unworthy to rank for all time as a symbol of the relations between India and our noble selves.

The nationality of that line inspector is a reminder, by the way, that Mrs. Steel's racial affinities lie beyond the Border. So much one might guess from her terrific power of application, her fondness for gristle and fibre in the way of situation, and her weakness for bestowing northern names and almost Ossianic attributes upon her leading characters. For years since her return from the East she has lived in Wales, or the western midlands, I believe, but if she has lived in the west, she has thought with the north, and most of her homespun yarns have been Scottish in their texture. There may be those of her readers who swear by "The Gift of the Gods," that wild and swirling study of shore-life in the western Orkneys, or some of the other tributes, like "Red Rowans," that she has paid to the North-British spirit in its native lair. But I could never find much enthusiasm for any of these, and the best of the bunch seems to be "Marmaduke," where you get a fine old baronial strain blending with chivalry and war, and (I must say it) a dash of melodrama. "Marmie," however, is too nearly an echo of Marmaduke to be the heroine's proper nickname, and the author's ear should be proof against this unintentional confusion. A worse fault is that, with all the clear and forceful writing at her command, she names a date but takes no pains to give us the colour of the period she has in mind, and we might be following some adventure of to-day if we did not suddenly come full tilt against Lord Raglan and the Alma.

It lays one open to the charge of ungraciousness to bring the same indictment against her most ambitious book, especially when it proclaims its theme in the preface and on every page. Possibly her best admirers would reply that Mrs. Steel's preoccupation is with phases of mind and action rather than the trifles of speech and fashion that differentiate one generation from the next. But in the case of a book like "On the Face of the Waters," where the outward shape is so elaborate and each of the five symmetrical books has its six well-rounded chapters, one expects a certain supremacy of finish in essentials like dialogue and episode, and it is disconcerting to drop from the heroic deeds of sixty years ago into byways of conversation that might so easily occur in a novel of to-day. Another foible of the author's proceeds in a still directer line from this sterling and self-denying honesty of hers, and that is the tendency to documentation. In a history or an essay we account it righteousness to assign citations to their proper source, and no one is a better judge than Mrs. Steel of authenticity or human interest; but in a novel citations are simply grit upon the wheel, and we resent the importation as if it were irrelevant. These intrusions of fact upon a train of illusion may appeal to a hard-headed few; but to bother about footnotes in a work of fiction, as Dizzy said of the deaf man straining to hear a debate, is simply wasting one's natural advantages, and betrays again her derivation from a northern race which studies economy in everything but effort.

Once this blemish has been noted, with a frankness that so honest a writer should appreciate, what a wonderful study of the Mutiny this book makes for posterity! India has the knack of self-preservation in defiance of railways and Padgett, M.P., but the historian must find it harder with the lapse of time to reawaken tombs and ruins and dispatches into life, or emulate the lurid triumphs of description we get in Lord Roberts's memoirs or Trevelyan's "Cawnpore." But in its third and fourth and fifth books, "On the Face of the Waters" unfolds such a panorama of heroism and horror as no writer, surely, has surpassed in Anglo-Indian literature, and it is hard without prior experience of her work, to conceive that the Meerut and Delhi chapters were done by a woman's hand. The heat and the rains, night and the glaring moon, the everlasting hill-track and the packed bazar, the dingy splendours of a nawâb's throne-room, and the immemorial water-rites of "Holy Gunga" or the pool of immortality in "The Hosts of the Lord"—these things have been done with success before by other pens, and must remain the staple of that deft mosaic which forms half the charm and nearly all the substance of Anglo-Indian fiction. But who has ever put into living and moving words, as Mrs. Steel has done, all the glamour and fierce remembrance that is involved for us in any glimpse or mention of the Delhi Ridge?

> "The Ridge itself was not unlike some huge spiny saurian basking in the sunlight; its tail in the river; its wider, flatter head, crowned by Hindoo Rao's house, resting on the groves and gardens of the Subz-mundi or Green Market, a suburb to the west of the town. It is a quaint, fanciful spot this Delhi Ridge even without the history of heroism crystallised into its very dust—a red dust which might almost have been stained by blood—a dust which matches that history, since it is formed of isolated atoms of rock,

glittering, perfect in themselves, like the isolated deeds which went to make up the finest record of pluck and perseverance the world is ever likely to see."

We have matched and beaten its record since, and the ridges of Picardy and Flanders will be lucky if they find a chronicler as apt and forcible. Alas, none of our writers have steeped themselves beforehand in the colour of the country, in the same way that Mrs. Steel bound herself apprentice to India, you may say, for long and arduous years. I have heard worthy sister-rivals in the same field extol her to the skies for her marvellous fidelity to native traits, especially love of children and care for the aged—just as all Anglo-Indians revere and bless her memory when they leave Jehangir's city for the dusty road and find a desert-haven in the little garden she planted there in the Oriental fashion, in days when she used to accompany her husband on his official journeys. So completely did she master the recesses of native myth and usage that great experts have said she possesses more of this subtle lore than they can claim after years of privilege and service. Perhaps we may say of them as she has said somewhere of the roses in an Indian garden, that the heat has dried them to potpourri as they grew; while of others, conscientious and unwearied though they be, you half suspect that they have been too ready to lay native ambitions to rest in a kind of political cemetery. But the contents of a grave are "in the guardianship of God," as the author's phrase goes, and even the long-dead Akbar, her "Prince of Dreamers," has still a potency for good if rightly cherished. A land whose gods were classic before our revelation dawned, needs all the high interpreters she can get if she is to attain a future worthy of our efforts and her own dim past. As Dan Fitzgerald says in "The Potter's Thumb," our fineness is at the bottom of half our mistakes in India, and "our complicated system of procedure only puts power into the hands of the educated few who naturally clamour for more." The implied dilemma between maudlin philanthropy and the far-sighted sternness of duty might well deter a bolder race than ours, if there is one, but it would be the height of folly not to see that the eye and the heart of a gifted woman, such as have gone to the writing of books like Mrs. Steel's, are a double blessing on the work ahead. For they broaden our racial sympathies and prove to the world our national sincerity.

JONATHAN SWIFT.*

BY T. E. PAGE.

THE aim of a portrait-painter, Tennyson tells us, is "divinely through all hindrance" to "see the man" and then to represent him "ever at his best and greatest." And for the artist, no doubt, some such principle holds good. No one desires to produce, or possess, a portrait that only repels. There may be what is called "ugliness" about it—such, for instance, as is to be found in portraits of Johnson—but the preponderating effect must be somehow to please and to suggest excellence of some kind. In literary portraiture on the other hand no such law seems to prevail, for, although the ordinary "Life of So-and-So" invariably flatters, with great historical figures it is certainly often otherwise, so that, while the maxim *De mortuis nihil nisi bonum* is on every lip, it is exactly against the dead that all the passions and prejudices which pervert our judgment exercise their fullest power. And the reason for this is not unclear. For human character is a very complex thing, a strange blend of contradictions even in ordinary folk, while in men of power—above all in those who have made their way by hard struggles—the qualities which compose it are often in violent disagreement. *Has tantes viri virtutes ingentia vitia aequabant*, wrote Livy of Hannibal, and the like could be said of hundreds of the mighty dead who either by their words or their deeds command the perpetual interest of mankind. Their greatness is incontestable; they are the giants of our race; but there is much about them that perplexes, so that we can form no clear, definite image of the real man. And then comes the portrait-painter—historian, biographer or novelist—and says "Behold!" But, unhappily, he can see and portray

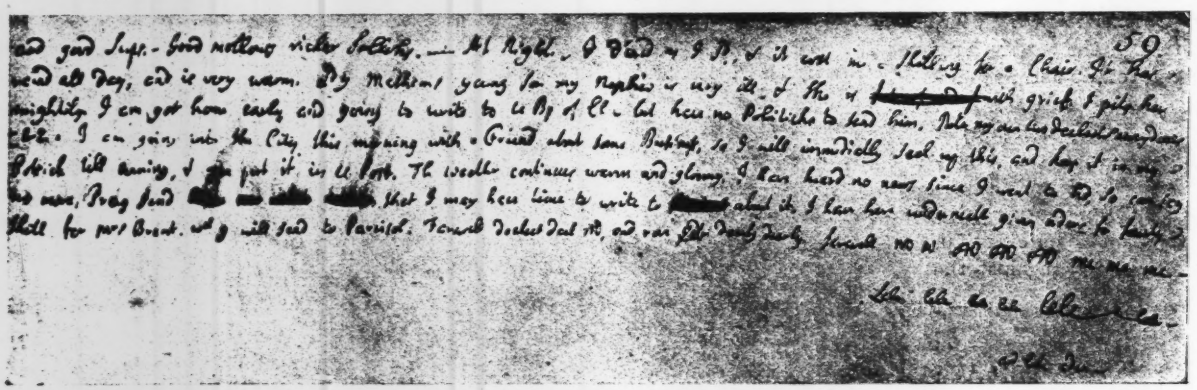
Jonathan Swift.
From a painting attributed to Jervas. (In the N.P.G., Dublin).

* "Jonathan Swift." The Leslie Stephen Lecture, delivered before the University of Cambridge on May 26th, 1917, by C. Whibley, M.A., Honorary Fellow of Jesus College. 1s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

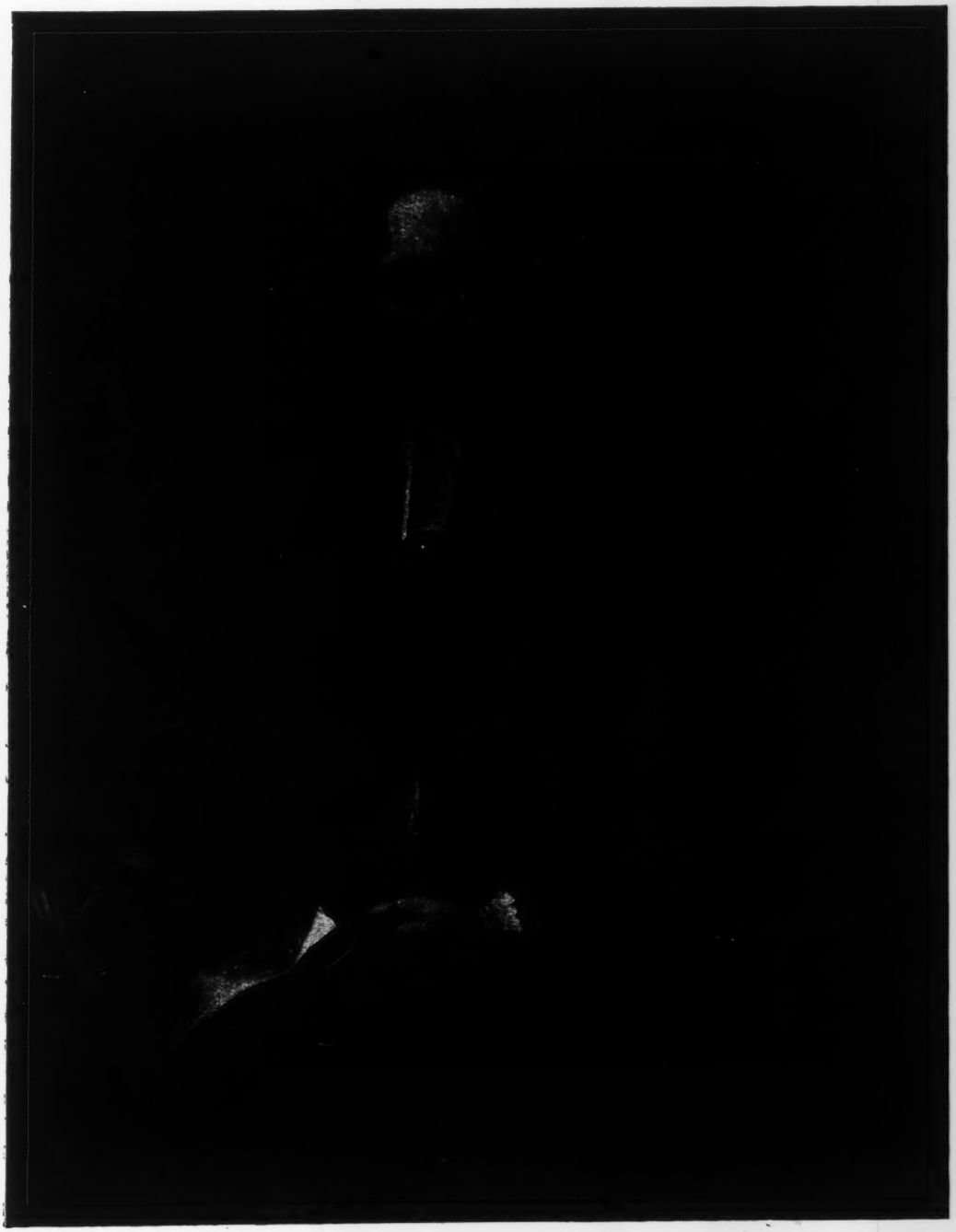
only the image in his own mind. He may make a hero out of a scoundrel, as Carlyle did with Frederic—for, in fact, he was a combination of the two—or he may adopt the reverse method; and in dealing with a great writer whose prejudices were only equalled by his genius, his strength by his infirmity, and his wit by his coarseness—who shall draw the man as he really was? Who shall show us Jonathan Swift with the exact lineaments and just colouring of truth? Assuredly no task could be harder; but neglect half his character and nothing could be easier. With a few bold and lurid phrases a schoolboy could off-hand give him the outline of the devil or the colouring of Mephistopheles, and Mr. Whibley justly complains that Macaulay and Thackeray have been scarcely less crude in their treatment. "For Macaulay," he writes, "Swift was an apostate politician, a ribald priest, a perjured lover, a heart burning with hatred against the whole human race, a mind richly stored with images from the dunghill," while Thackeray is "far more violent in his abuse." To him the Dean is worse than "a Yahoo"; he is "a life-long hypocrite"; in his "Modest Proposal" "he enters the nursery with the tread and gaiety of an ogre"; as for his opponents "he watched for them in a sewer and came out to assail them with a coward blow and a dirty bludgeon," and so on. But, obviously, this is not portrait-painting so much as caricature, or rather that debased form of caricature which appeals not to humour but to prejudice. Macaulay hated Tories and writes of Swift as political leader-writers are apt to do of deserters from their own party. Thackeray is a satirist who claims also to be sentimental, while it is Swift's humour to affect savagery, so that when the author of "Vanity Fair" says that, after reading "Gulliver," we should "hoot the Dean" because of its moral, it only shows that he thinks his own method of wielding the whip much more artistic. But, in fact, just as Swift's wit and humour were so original that, combined with his constant irony, they may often perplex, startle and even offend, so, it has been justly observed—the remark is Granger's, but emphatically endorsed by Scott—that "his patriotism, his charity, and even his piety were of a different cast from those of other men," but that none the less "he had in his virtues few equals." Or is the testimony of men like Arbuthnot and Bolingbroke, like Pope and Gay, to go utterly for nothing? The first wrote to him from his death-bed: "I shall to the last moment preserve my love and esteem for you, being well assured you will never leave the path of virtue and honour," the second: "I loved you almost twenty years ago: I thought of you as well as I do now, better even beyond the power of conception, or to avoid an equivoque, beyond the extent of my ideas." And then let any one read the letter (Scott's edition, vol. 16, p. 243) written to Bolingbroke after his fall, which begins, "I hope your lordship, who were always so kind to me while you were a servant, will not forget me now in your greatness," and he will wonder whether wine and oil were ever poured into a wound with such delicate solicitude of affection. Or let him turn to the "Evening Prayer" (vol. 1, p. 396) written by Swift for his private use, and say whether he was only "a ribald priest," or to the memorandum of his expenditure for the year 1701, amounting in all to £100, and judge Swift a little by the last three items: "Gifts and charity extraordinary, £10; Charity common, £2 10s.; Expenses common, £17."

Swift.
The bust by Roubiliac in Trinity College, Dublin.

But it is needless to go further, for the portrait of Swift has been drawn for all time by a great artist. The "Memoirs" which Walter Scott prefixed to his edition of Swift's works present a picture of the man which is at once true to fact, and executed with that care, that ability and, above all, that sympathy which are the proper debt of genius to genius. There is neither extenuation nor concealment. You can see the man at his best, and also at his worst, as, for instance, when he stalks into Vanessa's room at Marley Abbey, his face terrible with anger, "flings a letter on the table," utters no word, but "instantly quits the house, mounts his



Facsimile of portion of Swift's "Journal to Stella." 18 March 1711.
From the original in the British Museum.



From the painting by Jervas in the N.P.G.

Jonathan Swift.

horse and returns to Dublin," leaving the woman, whose only crime was love, relentlessly to her death. It is a horrible scene, and there is much both in Swift's life and writings that stirs only aversion—almost loathing. But none the less he is, more perhaps than any other great writer, essentially a tragic figure. His whole life is a tragedy; he is as interesting as Hamlet or King Lear, and Scott—surely a master of literary portraiture—has set him alive and breathing before our eyes. We may condemn or criticise as we will, but to read his "Memoirs of Jonathan Swift, D.D." is to be overpowered by that sense of awe which comes from witnessing a strange yet noble nature at perpetual odds with stern and inexorable fate.

It is just, however, this tragic greatness of Swift's life which Mr. Whibley fails to reproduce. As "Leslie Stephen Lecturer" at Cambridge his business was to afford an hour's interest to an academic audience, and his lecture, as here published, does exactly the same for the educated reader. He writes, as he always does, admirably; he offers happy entertainment and he provides it. But his portrait, assuredly, lacks light and shade. He needed the colours of Rembrandt, but he has been content to be smooth, sunny, and delightful. He presents us, in fact, with an Apology rather than with a Life. He ignores Stella and Vanessa; he says nothing about such poems as "Chloe and Strephon"; he claims that Swift was no "misanthrope" because, though he hated mankind, he loved his friends, and that he was no "cynic" because a cynic, it seems,—though Diogenes would perhaps have rejected the definition—is one "who looks upon life and morals with an indifferent curiosity," and "whose levity persuades him to smile upon the vices of others"; and he concludes by showing that Swift's style with "its proper words in proper places," and these the simplest words that could be found, was a better style than Johnson's, who loves "balance and arrangement" in his sentences and "was unhappy if there was not, here and there, a polysyllable to hold the lesser words in subjection."

None the less, although Mr. Whibley sketches Swift only with a light and, perhaps, too partial hand, his brief essay brings out in a true light some features which other writers have distorted, and, if it induces some readers to turn for a fuller presentation to the Dean's own writings and to Scott's great biography, it will have served a sufficient purpose.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

NOVEMBER, 1917.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, Warwick Square, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II., IV. and V. are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric. Imitations and paraphrases are inadmissible.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best four lines of original verse on the Householder's Sugar Card.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR OCTOBER.

I.—The PRIZE for the best original lyric is divided and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to Miss E. Richmond Faraday, of Church Croft, Orleton, Herefordshire, and Ivan Adair, of 54, Palmerston Road, Dublin, for the following:

ALL SOULS' DAY.

I will not offer prayer nor incantation;
I fear no jealous gods beyond the grave.
Sleeping or waking, past all tribulation,
Your soul is with the brave.

I bring no gathered gift of lingering roses,
No light to glow under the clouded sky;
In war's wide sepulchre no mark discloses
The chamber where you lie.

But I will see, one lonely hour beguiling,
The scarlet wreaths of briony that cling
In the wet lane where primroses were smiling
On you and me last spring.

I will go by the sloping meadow-reaches
And hear the robin singing after rain,
And think that underneath the yellow beeches
You walk with me again.

I will come home at dusk when firesides brighten,
And kneel awhile beside your empty chair,
And dream of hearing, as the shadows lighten,
Your footsteps on the stair.

E. RICHMOND FARADAY.

AFTER SUNSET.

When the voice of day is dumb
Thro' the autumn night they come.

Love hath paved a golden path,
From the sunset's aftermath.

Where their feet were wont to press
Sweeps each wondrous seamless dress.

Let Faith's bounteous board be spread
For our well-beloved dead.

Tho' we see them not, nor hear,
Yet we feel them gather near.

Light Hope's lamp and bid it burn
That they see it, and return.

This is fancy's golden dower—
They are here for one sweet hour.

IVAN ADAIR.

We also select for printing:

A PRAYER.

Like thistledown before the wind,
Like butterflies above sweet flowers,
We drift with every breeze that blows,
We sip the honey of the rose;
We heed no shadows cast behind,
Life is a chain of sunny hours.
Lord, let Thy great, all-seeing Eyes
Look down on us and make us wise!

Like little barks upon a stream
That swells and surges to the sea,
We swirl with every current's chance,
Swept here and there by circumstance.
Without a beacon's guiding gleam,
What hope, what help, what helm have we?
Lord, show us mercy in Thy might,
And steer our little boats aright!

(Cecily Fryer, Bury Hill, Woodbridge, Suffolk.)

A SONG OF THE STREETS.

I have lit a candle to Our Lady
There in her blue and silver shrine;
And she will look and see my poor endeavour
And she will pitying comfort me and mine:
Radiant, pure, and silver-blue
Is the shrine of Mary;—
Cold and dark and Godless too
The streets when you are weary!

I've threaded all the city streets and alleys
Until my soul was full of dust as they,
But now I've found a little place of quiet
Where you may enter in, then go your way:
Radiant, pure, and silver-blue
Is the shrine of Mary;—
Cold and dark and Godless too
The streets when you are weary!

(M. H. Drury, 32, Fernwood Avenue, Streatham, S.W.16.)

We specially commend the lyrics by Eileen Newton (Whitby), P. Allott (Eastchurch), D. F. Slade (Bath), V. D. Goodwin (Gillingham), Anthea (Torquay), J. A. Bellchambers (Highgate), May Dunne (Dublin), Alangot Balakrishnan Nambiar (Madras), Cyril G. Taylor (Heswall), Brian Hill (D.L.I., Salonika), Brenda Duncan (Croydon), C. E. S. (Glasgow), Marjorie Crosbie (Barnes), F. Baxter (Catford), Private W. Vallance (Montrose), Beatrice Bunting (West Hartlepool), Edwin J. Pratt (Toronto), G. Cawood (Croydon), Enid D. Woolbright (Chelsea), Dorothy L. Warne (Southwood), J. N. Cassell (Kilburn), P. J. Mudie (Manchester), Cadet H. M. Cresswell Payne (Bodmin), Anthony W. A. Watts (Earlsfield), A. H. Colbourne (Leamington), Gladys Hazel (Leicester), Margaret O. Curle (London, S.W.), B. E. Stevens (Washford), Mrs. A. E. Wise (Leicester), Zoe Provis (Waimato, N.Z.), Dorothea Jackson (Portsmouth), B. E. Todd (Doncaster), D. P. Thomas (Clarence Gate), Rev. J. Brown Young (Fife), Merle Tottenham (Maida Vale), Faith Hearn (Christchurch), Maud M. Bruce (Sunningdale), Helen C. Stone (Thornton Heath), J. H. Clarke (Ashford), Louis Golding (Manchester), G. S. S. (Preston), Evelina Ida San Garde (Accrington), Private R. C. Bodker (Woolwich), Private M. Hayward Potter (Egyptian Exp. Force), Mabel Leigh (Kensington), C. Burton (Upper Norwood), Petty-Officer T. Malley, R.N.V.R. (Kerry), F. C. Loveday (Woodford Wells), Leonard Somervill (Woolwich), Beryl Carter (London, S.W.), John Wayne (Leighton Buzzard), H. J. Hooper (Chipstead), Ronald St. Aubyn (Jersey), Anna G. Lang (Cardiff), Norah Denny (London, W.), Mabel E. Godley (Birmingham), Gerald Bull (Croydon), Norman J. Bickle (Plympton St. Mary), Amy Evers (Stourbridge), Mrs. Guy Branson (Birmingham), Rev. E. C. Lansdown (Eastbourne), Frank H. Humby (Sidcup), J. Desandor (Woodford Wells), William Murray (Aberdeen), Rifleman G. A. P. Groves (B.E.F., France), Constance Goodwin (Clapham).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to the Rev. F. Hern, of Rowlands Castle, Hants, for the following:

MADAME ADAM. By WINIFRED STEPHENS.
(Chapman & Hall.)
"Our grandmother Eve."
SHAKESPEARE, *Love's Labour Lost, Act I., Sc. i.*

We also select for printing:

KNOCK THREE TIMES.
By Mrs. MARION ST. JOHN WEBB.
(Harrap.)
"I wish you were not quite so deaf."
LEWIS CARROLL, *Through the Looking-Glass.*

(Charles Powell, 33, Clyde Road, West Didsbury, Manchester.)

THE CANTEENERS. By AGNES M. DIXON.
(Murray.)
"The 'Woodbine' spices are wafted abroad"
TENNYSON, *Maud.*

(Rev. Edwin C. Lansdown, 33, Hartfield Road, Eastbourne.)

Photo by L. Vautier. **Mrs. Stanley Wrench,**
whose new novel, "Beat" (Duckworth), was reviewed in last month's BOOKMAN.

FINISHED. By RIDER HAGGARD. (Ward, Lock.)

"But I hope the poor man is insured."
HOOD, *Don't You Smell Fire?*

(Mrs. A. E. Wise, 7, High Street, Leicester.)

THE STUDENT'S GUIDE. By PROFESSOR ADAMS. (University of London Press.)

"I fled him down the nights and down the days."
FRANCIS THOMPSON, *The Hound of Heaven.*

(Miss W. T. H. Bolton, 18, Risca Road, Newport, Mon.)

THE EVERLASTING QUEST. By H. L. WEBB. (Macmillan.)

"Gold, gold, gold, gold."
HOOD, *Miss Kilmansegg.*

(Irene Lalonde, 14, Forester Road, Bath.)

MISSING. By MRS. HUMPHRY WARD. (Collins.)

"Little Murphy, now, I remember, was once lost for a month through stealing a penny bun."
HOOD, *The Lost Heir.*

(Eileen Newton, White Haven, Whitby, Yorks.)

III.—The PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best poem on War is awarded to Miss S. M. Isaacson, 14, Gordon Place, Campden Hill, for the following:

A REQUIEM.

"For them, the pure, enfranchised dead," (*Brooke*)
"Weep not, O friend, we should not weep," (*Rossetti*)
"Why should they reck whose task is done?"
(*Mrs. Hemans*)
"He giveth His beloved, sleep." (*E. B. Browning*)

"Then to their happy rest they pass," (*M. Arnold*)
"The God we trust is on that shore." (*Faber*)
"'Tis vain to weep, 'tis vain to sigh," (*Hood*)
"Across the world we mark the score." (*Newbolt*)

"Is't death to fall for Freedom's right?" (*Campbell*)
"The swelling bosom dares not sigh." (*Keble*)
"My heart leaps up when I behold" (*Wordsworth*)
"The graves of those that cannot die." (*Byron*)

None of the many attempts sent are quite satisfactory. The few that deal with war in general are too disconnected and fail to carry on the sense from one line to the next; the same fault disqualifies others on various phases of war, and nearly half are unrhymed. The best three of these others are by E. M. O'Dell (Forest Gate), F. W. Kirchlicke (Tadworth), and W. Butcher (Hampstead).

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to Miss J. A. Jenkins, of Edge Hill College, Liverpool, for the following:

THORGILS OF TREADHOLT.

By MAURICE HEWLETT. (Ward, Lock.)

This story, based on Icelandic sagas, is suggestive of the world of primitive men and women in the frankness of their self-expression and the outspokenness of their desires. The language in which Thorgils' adventures are described is marvellously suited to the deeds thus described, and the "strong brave man" stands out a prominent figure among those whom he dwarfs at all points by the wonder of his achievements as well as by the courageous heroism which he shows in the face of direst sorrow! The human touches are delightful in their tenderness, and suggest the kinship of the whole world.

We also select for printing:

THE SOUL OF A BISHOP. By H. G. WELLS. (Cassell.)

In discussing the more recent of Mr. Wells's works, the ordinary canons of criticism are largely inapplicable. As a novel this book presents just that consummate skill in the use of words; that passionate dialogue, luminous even in its incoherences; that strange feeling of detachment from everyday reality which make up the distinctiveness of its author's style. As a piece of religious psychology its attractiveness depends to a great extent upon individual predisposition. But whether one believes or disbelieves in God as He is here depicted, one cannot help but admire the beauty, the wonderful mystic splendour of the conception.

(Eric N. Simons, 10, Endcliffe Rise Road, Sheffield.)

THE WONDERFUL YEAR. By W. J. LOCKE. (John Lane.)

Mr. Locke, with his charming and inimitable camaraderie, has led us into the heart of Perigord. The lovable Bigourdin and the charming Felise, who are skilled in the mysteries of *pâté de foie gras* making; Fortinbras, the dealer in Happiness for others, who hides his own tragedy so bravely; Martin, the simple English schoolmaster, and Corinne, the English girl who strives for a free life; all make a coterie of delightful friends for readers. How ingeniously their lives intertwine, and the Egyptian interlude brought about by a rich American girl, make Mr. Locke's book, as usual, most fascinating reading.

(Heather Hammond, 329, Wakefield Street, Adelaide, South Australia.)

LORD TONY'S WIFE. By BARONESS ORCZY. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

A new Scarlet Pimpernel novel is an event in the literary world, for no hero of modern fiction has a greater hold upon the affections of his readers than that dashing, debonair gentleman. Here we have him again as irresistible as ever, together with his faithful squire, Lord Tony, and a new and charming heroine. The picture of France in the throes of the great Revolution is of peculiar interest in these days of Russia's agony of re-birth. Passionate love scenes and hairbreadth adventures make up a great novel, worthy of its talented authoress.

(James A. Richards, 10, Park Road, Tenby.)

THE NATIONAL HISTORY OF FRANCE: THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

By CASIMIR STRYIENSKI. (Heinemann.)

The perusal of French history in a book of this character is a pleasure. It covers the period from the death of Louis XIV. to the dawn of the Revolution. It is the formative period which elucidates the Revolution itself, it is the Pompadour period, it is the period of Louis the Well-Beloved, it is the period of Louis the unpopular, of Marie Antoinette, a charming young girl as the Emperor Joseph called her, and of the beginning of the end. It is French history made exceedingly interesting, written with the same clarity as the other works of this series and excellently translated from the French.

(Gerald McMichael, 105, Colmore Row, Birmingham.)

From the numerous other reviews received we select for special commendation the twenty by Elsie M. Meredith (Bideford), Mrs. Kirkland Vesey (Glenfarg), C. G. M. Brown (Camberwell), Margaret Tupman (Worthing) Alice W. Linford (London, N.), Irene Lalonde (Bath), V. W. Ware (London, S.W.), Dorothy Johnson (Warrington), W. A. Bates (Bridport), S. Hunter (Chesterfield), Frank Kelly (Dublin), Mrs. D. O. Wood (Worcester Park), Rolanda Hirst (Cork), G. E. Mitton (Brook Green), M. B. Isitt (Braunton), S. M. Margoliouth (Brighton), Eric Gillett (Disley), Ferdinand Young (Southampton), Gladys M. Rothery (N.S.W., Australia), William Sinclair (Birmingham).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION to THE BOOKMAN is awarded to Florence Parsons, of Northcott House, Ellesmere Road, Altrincham.

New Books.

PAIDOCENTRICISM.*

Probably neither Miss Margaret Macmillan nor Mr. Caldwell Cook will be pleased to have Dr. Stanley Hall's appalling adjective *paidocentric* applied to their work; yet the common characteristic of the two books under discussion is the placing of the pupil in the foreground and concentrating the reader's attention on him. In "The Camp School" the pupil's interests are defended against the claims of mere buildings; in "The Play Way" they are defended against the claims of what are usually called school "subjects." This setting of the pupil in the centre of attention is probably the most striking characteristic of what is coming to be known as the New Education.

Miss Macmillan's little book is striking both for its form and for its matter. Occasionally the reader might prefer a more direct style than the author adopts, but in most cases the presentation is admirably fitted to carry conviction. The obvious sincerity of the author, added to the acknowledged value of the constructive work she has done, wins our liking from the first; and the dramatic descriptions of her self-denying experiments and of the typical "cases" rouse our admiration from the artistic side while they stir our enthusiasm and sometimes our indignation from the practical. It is a curious outcome of our desire to get the best possible material conditions for our public education that genuine individual enterprise like that of Miss Macmillan and her sister should be baulked. Because they could not provide the best possible buildings and appliances they were denied financial support in making the best of what they had. We all want the best physical conditions for our young people at school, but sensible people will agree with Miss Rachel Macmillan that "unless we economise in building, but spend freely on personnel, spend so as to have small classes, practical training in hygiene, prolonged education, and a new status for teachers, nothing will be changed."

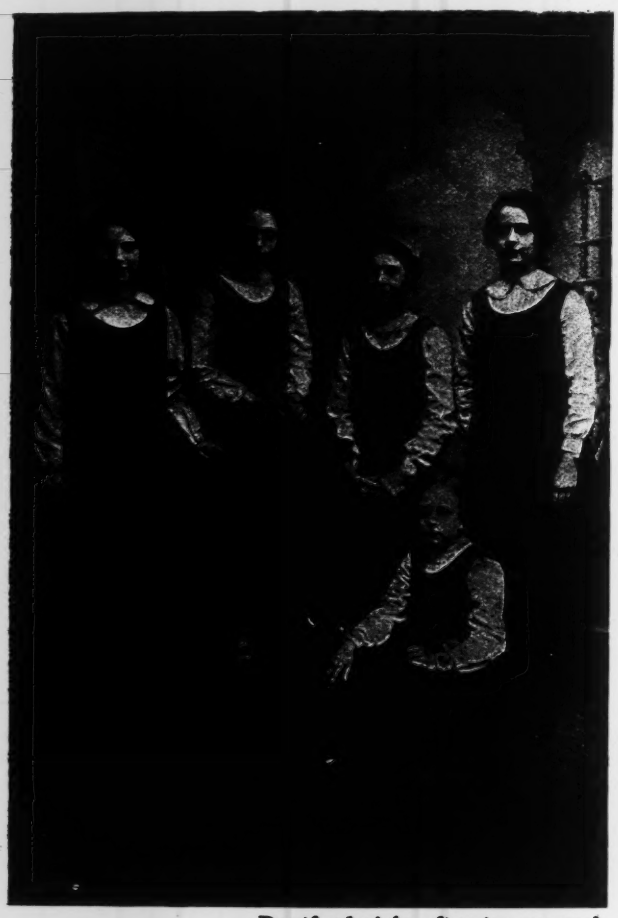
One outcome of Miss Macmillan's experience in her school clinic will startle the reader. She found that children who received mere medical treatment for certain common ailments were cured over and over again, and kept returning at intervals for fresh treatment. When proper feeding and housing could be obtained, such cases were easily and *permanently* cured. "The Camp School" did far more for the health of the children than anything that a school clinic can do.

Miss Macmillan clearly realises the place of play as a part of education, but her point of view is rather that of Mr. Henry Curtis and others who have taken up the subject of play as a sort of school subject. With this attitude Mr. Caldwell Cook has full sympathy, but he makes quite a different approach. With him, as his title implies, play is treated as a method. Serious subjects are to be treated in "the Play Way," for by play he means "the doing anything with one's heart in it." He is careful to point out that "the Play Way is not the easy way." He is familiar with all the talk about "too interesting" and "soft pedagogy," and explains that play is "not put forward for the destination but chiefly for the journey. Any means that becomes in this way an end in itself I call the Play Way." Above all he is anxious that we should not regard play methods as "a relaxation or a diversion from real study, but only an active way of learning." He tells us that school teaching is too exclusively literary, and social life too exclusively practical. His hope is that the Play Way may bridge the gulf.

Mr. Caldwell Cook does not write as a mere theorist. He has been applying with success for four years at the Perse School the methods he advocates and describes. He writes as a practical man to practical men, but one trembles to think of the state of mind of the conventional schoolmaster as he reads these startling pages. It is true that our author does not claim any special originality: indeed, he assures us that there is "no turbulent novelty" in his method, that, in fact, he is only describing in detail plans that have always been implicit in the schemes of some of our greatest educators. But the conventional master will be hard to convince, and to tell the truth Mr. Caldwell Cook does not go out of his way to conciliate him. Pedagogy "reeks of humbug," and education will always be a stodgy process until teachers "throw the pedagogical professors overboard." No great resentment will be roused by this outburst, for the number of masters who are tainted with a love of pedagogy is negligible. But when he talks of schoolmasters "doddering on," of school, with few exceptions, being "a gigantic humbug," of the "ignorance and incompetence of narrow-minded teachers," he does not seem to be a very keen candidate for popularity. Provocative as it is the book is singularly attractive. The author tells what he has actually done with *Littleman*, which, as most people now know, is the Perse School term for any boy under thirteen. He gets the Littlemen to

"The Gods" dictating their lines after inventing the "Rag" scene in Balder's Death (Act ii. Scene 2).
From "The Play Way" (Heinemann).

* "The Camp School." By Margaret Macmillan. 3s. 6d. net. (Allen & Unwin.)—"The Play Way." By H. Caldwell Cook. 8s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)



Deptford girls after two years' training in Evelyn House.

From "The Camp School" (Allen & Unwin).

give ten-minute lectures to each other under the strictest conditions of mutual criticism. They perform Shakespearean plays; they make plays of their own and act them; they elaborate systems of signs and develop a scheme of miming; they write ballads; they draw symbolical maps (called Ilonds); they make chapbooks. Mr. Caldwell Cook's subject in school is English, and we are led to infer that all these wild doings result in the long run in a very effective mastery of matters that are usually taught in a very different way. Many schoolmasters will want to know how Littleman figures in examination lists when the day of wrath finally dawns. Details on this point are lacking in the book, but for my part I should not be surprised if, in a subject like English, Littleman when he reached seventeen or eighteen did extremely well in an examination that gave him fair scope to display originality and wide reading. Even if the exigencies of the later years make it imperative that "the Play Way" should then be modified, there is nothing in this inconsistent with our author's principles.

The book suggests little love for the "subject" teacher, the man who puts in the foreground the matter to be taught, and takes little thought of the pupil. The really important thing is what the pupil, not the teacher, does. "If there is one thing teachers *will* do, in and out of season, it is—teach." In another place Mr. Caldwell Cook cannot express sufficiently his contempt for an American lady teacher who wondered how he managed to *teach* his pupils to be natural. This self-denying ordinance to which teachers are called to submit will probably repel many of them, but the best way to reach an intelligent view of the problem is to read the book. Like many other educational methods "the Play Way" is not of universal application. It does not suit all subjects, and not all teachers are capable of applying it to any subject. But it has a great and a growing value. In Mr. Caldwell Cook it has found a brilliant advocate, who could, if time had been allowed him, have made a still more effective case. "Somewhere in France" is an uncomfortable place to write books: it is to be hoped that the promised continuation may be written under happier conditions.

JOHN ADAMS.

FOUR.*

Sometimes one is inclined to think that there aren't any more new themes for novels; they pour themselves forth with such a persistent likeness to one another in every respect except style. But exceptions prove rules, even in the domain of fiction, and with these four books under review, with which I have lately been in such intimate relation, the rule is more than proven.

Indeed it hardly affects the rule, since the book that establishes it is not (presumably) fiction at all. It is called a biography. It might be called anything. Personally I would rather describe it as a pow-wow. It is written by two men in collaboration who make varied remarks about another man, whom (as they openly confess) they do not understand, and who does not seem, according to this logic, ever to have existed. But it is a great book, all the same. The originality of its conception and execution cannot be denied. Though its chief merit is its enormous garrulousness. You feel, as you rise from reading it, as if you had been having a tremendous jaw with three tremendous youngsters who have for hours been splashing about as it were all over the shop. It would take ten volumes as large as itself in which to criticise it adequately. And this is just what Mr. Beresford (I think) implores you to do. And I also. Because there must be just as many W. E. Fords in this world as there are readers to make his acquaintance.

And now for those three novels which are all so much alike in their unlikeness.

Perhaps something of this similarity is due to a new fashion in the names of characters in modern stories, in the shaping of the chief *motif* and fresh characters, and especially in their talk. "There's no biggod nonsense about 'em." They are all racy of the turf, witty in a way that makes you feel as if you ought to go in for being witty yourself, extremely talkative and even more extremely American, though nominally English. And always they are dead smart. It isn't possible to be anything but dead smart in a modern English novel . . . until the moment arrives that calls for a "My God!" or so, and the chapter ends abruptly with the lady on the floor.

But, to distinguish, I think that Miss Bottome's book is far the best of the three. It is not altogether dead smart or in the least American, I'm afraid, though brilliantly sparkling in its dialogue. At the same time it has the compensating advantages of being deftly planned, conscientiously wrought, and above all both clearly and cleanly written. But Miss Bottome's central idea is essentially the same as that of the other two authors left on my list to deal with: the idea of the two men and the two women shuffling their hearts as if they were cards, never making up their minds until they have exhausted all possibilities, and so concluding with an impossibility, after all. But the plot does not matter much. The story is too honestly based on the humanities, the characters so alive and afire with the actualities of life, the secondary characters too well drawn, and the general effect, the general philosophy, too well done to be obscured by any smoke of mystery. A capital book indeed, and an interesting.

In the very first sentence of the very first chapter of Mr.

* "W. E. Ford." By J. D. Beresford and Kenneth Richmond. 6s. net. (Collins.)—"A Certain Star." By Phyllis Bottome. 5s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)—"Rebellion." By S. P. B. Mais. 5s. net. (Grant Richards.)—"Haphazard." By W. F. Casey. 5s. net. (Constable.)

Mais' book his heroine is going upstairs to pack. That used to be a very usual thing for most heroines of the nineteenth century to do. But then they suffered accordingly. They fainted on crusty old bachelors' doorsteps or got into rivers to be rescued by other younger bachelors. Not so Mr. Mais' heroine. The result of the first exciting adventure which ensued on that first packing so exhilarated her that she went on packing for the rest of her life: packing and flitting and (saving your presence) living the life that was in the old sense "gilded" and in the new sense "free." A most expensive, captious, charming, provoking, and of course superlatively beautiful girl. Many men want to marry her, none of whom deserves her, and so none gets her. One of them does not want to marry her, so does get her—as it were, by the way—then abandons her, presently to come back wounded from the war, and so on. This, however, is not to make too light of Mr. Mais' book, which contains some really strong character studies and most certainly has a manner of its own. Only, to be frank, it all leaves a slightly nasty taste in my mouth.

And so does "Haphazard" leave that nasty taste. I don't know Mr. Casey's previous work. I merely realise at this moment that it is quite brilliant in a journalistic style, and surely the most American sample of this particular bunch. Moreover, it adopts the everlasting old-new theme of the two men and the two women playing some game like musical chairs in which one or another member of the party is for ever falling out. And again, "Haphazard" shares also that other new fashion of using the same kind of names for his own characters as all other authors use for theirs. I can't remember these names at all. They suggest no shadow of a real personality, almost all of them being applied to so many totally different characters in the other authors' books, so that the facile adoption by Mr. Casey of this widening new vogue in the modern fiction-factory has practically destroyed his own story for me, leaving only that unpleasant odour, and spoiling what after all is a piece of quite good writing, intermingling wit and philosophy with a little ullage of humour.

EDWIN PUGH.

PAWNS.*

These three short plays, grouped together under a title reminiscent of the fatalistic tent-maker, have all been acted under their author's direction by the Birmingham Repertory Theatre company. It is not necessary to have seen the performances (though not to have done so is certainly matter for regret) to know that they went well on the stage. Mr. Drinkwater has had that practical experience of the theatre for the lack of which so many poets have sung melodiously through five acts in vain. His plays are dramatic.

They are very simple in structure, however, and not supported by any merely theatrical mechanism. Only in one of them, the curiously entitled "X = o," are we conscious of any artificial contrivance of effect: the equation works out a little too neatly. In "The Storm" a young woman is waiting in a mountain cottage for her husband who is out in the tempest. We know from the very beginning that he will not return. Nevertheless we are interested. It is quite unimportant that a dramatist should create suspense in the minds of his audience: many of the greatest plays are founded on fables known by all. But it is of paramount importance that he should interest us in the suspenses of his characters. Mr. Drinkwater interests us intensely in Alice's desperate optimism, in old Sarah's bitter pessimism, in the sage sisterliness of the child Joan. He does so because the characters are intensely realised and because every word they utter is vital. Take, for instance, this fragment of the dialogue between Alice, now fast losing hope, and the Stranger, who has sought shelter in the cottage. The sophisticated lowlander, exalted by his struggle with the elements, and ignorant of the woman's tragedy, speaks:

"Beauty was winged about me, darkling speed
Took pressure of earth and smote against my face;
I rode upon the front of heroic hours,
And once was on the crest of the world's tide,
Unseared as the elements.—But he mastered me,
That god striking a star for holiday,
And filled himself with great barbaric laughter
To see me slink away."
ALICE: "It is no god,
But a brainless anger, a gaunt and evil thing
That blame can't reach."
THE STRANGER: "Not all have eyes to see.—
I'm harsh with my words, but I come from a harsh quarrel
With larger thews than man's."
ALICE: "Stranger, I'd give
Comely words to any who knocks at the door.
You are welcome—but leave your praising of this blight.
You safely gabbing of sly and cruel fairies,
Like a child laughing before a cage of tigers.
You with your fancy talk of lords and gods
And your hero-veins—young man, do you know this night
Is eating through my bones into the marrow,
And creeping round my brain till thought is dead.
And making my heart the oldest thing of any?"

It is a joy to read such vivid, well-knit stuff as this, and it would be a joy to hear it well spoken. Consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Drinkwater has put into practice Synge's almost hackneyed but never-to-be-neglected precept, that in a good play every speech should be as fully flavoured as a nut or an apple.

The passage quoted also serves to illustrate the quality of Mr. Drinkwater's blank verse. A fault to be found with some of his lyric work is that it is too smooth in texture. Here, the perfectly regular line is exceptional. Like a painter who gives his picture vitality by rough and broken brushwork, the poet makes his speech living and nervous by an infinite variation of stress and pause, fusing here, articulating there at the bidding of emotion and in defiance of the foot rule. But the result is never prose: it is always good verse as well as good poetry.

Mr. Drinkwater's gift for smooth writing appears in "The God of Quiet" and is perfectly appropriate there. For the play is allegorical, and the matter of Puvis de Chavannes could not be rendered in the manner of Manet. The use of rhyme also suits the theme, producing a rarefied and lyrical effect, while monotony is avoided by the changes from octosyllable to decasyllable.

"The God of Quiet" is a war (though by no means a khaki) play; the argument being that it takes two to keep the peace and that, however many men worship the god, if one man shatter his image strife will reign. It is a pertinent argument; and still more poignantly apt is that of "X = o: A Night of the Trojan War":

"It's still a glad thing to do as the motherland bids,
Though the blind soul forgets how sprang the cause. . . .
Yet it is bitterness for youth,
When nothing should be but scrutiny of life,
Mating, and building towards a durable fame,
And setting the hearthstone trim for a lover's cares,
To let all knowledge of these things go, and learn
Only of death, that should be hidden from youth,
A great thing biding upon the fulness of age,
And not made common gossip among these tides
Of daily beastliness."

If only the elderly warmongers had that vision!

FRANCIS BICKLEY.

* "Pawns: Three Poetic Plays." By John Drinkwater. 2s. 6d. net. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

DIAZ.*

There have been a certain number of books written about General Diaz—some of them chant his praise with every instrument of the orchestra, some of them denounce him utterly. Mr. Hannay, in this delightfully written and interesting volume, steers a judicious course, but finally he can be claimed as one of themselves by the hostile critics. Not that he does not admit the extenuating circumstances; he explains what enormous obstacles Don Porfirio had to face and agrees that a milder régime in such a country might well have been impossible. But

* "Diaz." By David Hannay. 6s. net. (Constable.)

Diaz stands condemned in that he made no attempt whatever to improve the lot of the Indians from whom he himself had partly sprung, but permitted the abominations that Mr. Turner exposed in his book, "Barbarous Mexico," in which, I think, there is very little exaggeration, and Don Porfirio's whole system was one that produced a merely material and superficial prosperity. Mr. Hannay appears to be in much greater sympathy with Diaz while he was winning his spurs, and indeed Don Porfirio seems to have been as judicious as Mr. Hannay. But once having safely arrived, and the foreign capitalists being enlisted in his favour, he could afford to be as Mexican as any of them. No doubt the vituperation of Carlo de Fornaro errs as much on the one side as the honeyed phrases of Mrs. Alec Tweedie err on the other; but if a writer as dispassionate and philosophic as Mr. Hannay concludes that he failed and shows how absurd it is to mention him in the same breath as the great European statesmen, we may believe that this will be the ultimate verdict of History. His work, says Mr. Hannay, "was naught if we look beyond the outward and visible things which money and labour can produce between them, and try to pierce into those inward and spiritual things which alone make the health of a nation, and without which all the triumphs of industry are but pearls on the swine's snout." Mr. Hannay tells us how "in his later years possible competitors for the Presidency used to vanish into prison, and did not always come out"; but perhaps Mr. Hannay might have added that this fate overtook a good many other persons, such as independent journalists; and something might have been said about San Juan de Ulloa whose dungeons, through which the sea-water ebbed and flowed, were horrible even for Mexico. It has been proved that a number of victims were successively placed in cells whose previous occupant had died of tuberculosis. The massacre of Orizaba, when the troops entered a factory and shot in cold blood between two hundred and fifty and three hundred workmen who were no longer on strike, is not mentioned; nor is this one of the stories which, as Mr. Hannay points out, have been repeated with insufficient evidence. It would be foolish to deny that Diaz brought order out of chaos and that if the rifle was too often his instrument no other would have been half as effective. The "Indian Republic" idea, which Juarez is reproached for not having started, would have been doomed to failure; and indeed one cannot help wondering what a Cavour, a Napoleon and a Solomon all together could have done in the position of Diaz, with the sluggish mass of Indians on the one hand and the United States on the other. Mr. Hannay evidently believes that sooner or later the territory of Mexico will be administered, to a greater or less extent, by Washington. Mexico as an independent State has been far from a success, but as the more terrible aspects vanish into the past there will remain the picturesque memories, and if Mr. Hannay does not rank with old Bernal Diaz the Conquistador as a painter, he is nevertheless a very worthy historian of this period in the life of that strange and hopeless and fascinating country.

HENRY BAERLEIN.

NINETY-SIX HOURS' LEAVE.*

Mr. Stephen McKenna is evidently not the serious-minded person some of us imagined after reading "Sonia." That book, with its portentous sub-title, "Or Between Two Worlds," reminding one of the prizes one used to get from Sunday School, was with all its faults probably the finest political novel since Disraeli, and a very, very serious affair indeed. "Ninety-Six Hours' Leave," on the other hand, has no sub-title hinting at great thoughts behind the story, and has been written purely for amusement—not only for the amusement of the reader, but also, one imagines, for the amusement of the author. It is probably a reaction; and if Mr. McKenna had wished to describe it as fully as his previous book, he might have called it "Ninety-Six Hours' Leave, or A Great Lark!"

The fun begins on the very first page, when Lieutenant Christopher Markham, called by his intimates Kit, or Kitten, home from the trenches with two friends and the joyful prospect of four days' leave, is discovered in a telegraph office "negligently giving play to immaturely polygamous instincts," and languidly sending wires. Every detail of the holiday has been arranged beforehand by the organising genius of the party, Captain Fenwick, called "Nap" for obvious reasons, who has been a lecturer on logic at Oxford, and so has one of those tidy sorts of mind. Fenwick is to arrange things, Osborne, the second of the trio, is to pay all expenses, while Markham is to fall in with the plans made, do as he is told, and be as little trouble as possible.

Unfortunately, like many great generals before him, "Napoleon" Fenwick omits to give due consideration to the human element, and for this reason his arrangements, which include, in the first place, a Turkish bath, dinner at the Semiramis and a box at the Alhambra, gang agley. And the human elements he omits to consider are those "immature polygamous instincts" already mentioned, which Kit Markham possesses in great measure, and which lead him, after having sent off five business telegrams, to send off another, just to make up the half-dozen, to a girl he knows. And having sent off the telegram he is immediately unfaithful to the recipient of it, for he falls in love at first sight with a girl he meets at Victoria, and this, in turn, leads him to change his uniform for a suit of reach-me-downs called a gentleman's natty suiting, in order that he may preserve his incognito while purchasing a gold wristlet watch with initials on it. It is Markham's custom to introduce himself to the objects of his amorous attention by presenting them with a gold wrist-watch which he pretends he has seen them drop, and he has previously never known the device to fail.

So it comes about that when Fenwick and Osborne in immaculate evening dress arrive at the Semiramis for dinner, they find Kit Markham waiting for them in his natty suiting. Like the German General Staff after the Battle of the Marne, they had, on the spur of the moment, to devise a new plan of campaign, for the doors of Paradise are not so fast closed to the sinner as the doors of the Semiramis dining-room to the undressed guest. "Nap" Fenwick's great mind, however, is equal to the emergency. Conduct which is a grievous breach of taste in the ordinary man is a mere eccentricity if the man is a prince, and it happens that that very night, a real prince is expected at the Semiramis in the person of Cristofero of Catania; although, as Fenwick knows, his arrival has been delayed by a persistent submarine. Markham has the grand manner, and speaks Italian like a native. What could be easier than for him to impersonate the royal visitor? So the stage is set, and the play develops, with never a dull moment from first to last. At one time, as, for instance, when Kit purchases his ready-made suit and goes to change at his taxi-driver's club—the Royal Omnibus—we have pure farce, which changes to melodrama when the German spies who are on the track of the real Cristofero, stalk Markham by mistake. Here we are well catered for, for there is one attempted murder, one killing and one suicide, with plots and counter-plots and complications and stacks of "detective interest." And binding the whole together is a tender love-story, which ends happily on the last page with a blue-eyed girl running down the platform at Victoria and calling out, "Good-bye, Kitten darling! Good luck!"

Yes, undoubtedly "Ninety-Six Hours' Leave" is a Great Lark, and one reader, at least, hopes that Mr. McKenna will soon give us the record of another.

C. S. EVANS.

* "Ninety-Six Hours' Leave." By Stephen McKenna. 6s. net. (Methuen.)

DILKE.*

One of these fine days some one will proclaim a "discovery" of the value of juxtaposition and exalt it into a new philosophy of art. It certainly accounts for half the

* "The Life of Sir Charles W. Dilke." Begun by Stephen Gwynn, M.P., completed and edited by Gertrude M. Tuckwell. 36s. net. Two volumes. (Murray.)

Sir Charles W. Dilke.

From a drawing by W. Strang in 1908.
From "The Life of Sir Charles W. Dilke" (John Murray).

value of drama and nearly all the charm of literature, while it counts for still more as regards the interest of life. This latter-day world, preoccupied with its mission and its war, has grown to think rather small beer of the Victorian era except as a seed-bed of fading reputations, and it would be a tempting of providence, speaking off-hand, to announce a two-volume biography of a statesman who never attained the premiership he expected, and spent the second half of his career in a permanent opposition of one. But we have found that Parnell is a magic name to conjure with among the readers of new books, and the same proves true of Sir Charles Dilke. Like Parnell he stands in the memory of his generation as a figure of romantic tragedy hurled from a stage of climacteric triumphs into the exterior darkness of the parable. And Dilke's was by far the worse disaster of the two, for he commanded a brighter prospect, his host of influential friends made the "Uncrowned King" seem a hermit by comparison, and Dilke could not carry into retirement that idolatry in which Parnell is surrounded in Ireland to this day. Besides, Parnell discreetly died, and Dilke lived on into this century. The echo of the crash is so resonant even now that it would make the popular fortunes of this book apart from its intrinsic merit, and in spite of a reticence one cannot sufficiently admire.

The fact is that the public of the middle "eighties" allowed itself to be startled by this juxtaposition of success and failure. It saw assailed in the most unanswerable way the last public figure it could possibly associate with the idea of scandal. Dilke was marked out from the first as a veritable darling of the influential gods. He came of a better strain than mere aristocracy could give; he justified the doting solicitude of his grandsire by the versatility and intellectual ability he showed; and he revealed a power of application to serviceable pursuits which was a solid augury for rise and reputation. He entered on equal terms into the best of company in London and Paris; he talked well and listened wisely; he went through Cambridge with popularity and credit and made many lasting friends; he took what the eighteenth century called the "grand tour" and more, for he made the round of the world; and the letters he sent home proved the nucleus of a book which is still regarded as the primer of British Imperialism. On the whole, "Greater Britain" could hardly have had a better herald and expositor, nor could he have found in all its orbit a more favoured luminary than himself.

There was only one defect in this cluster of favouring conditions. Dilke had been overtrained, and he never shook off the effects of it. He suffered from the high strain of intensive culture to which from the first he had been subjected. There is no word of his grandfather having planted him upon a table as Pitt was placed, and Philip Doddridge, in order to fledge their youthful oratory. As a matter of fact, Dilke's ideals of speechmaking remained among the best influences he had—self-repressive, modest, and disdainful of everything but hard thinking and clear argument. But in all else it is evident that Dilke was spoiled by too much harping on the everlasting importance of importance, and this obsession, which is all very well for the publicist with his character fully formed, is an almost fatal handicap for a lad entering upon life. It produced a mental attitude which provoked all his best friends to warn him against priggishness; it moved him to make speeches he himself described as "dreary"; and it left him with a hot-house reputation which collapsed at the first touch of chill. There were contemporaries of his even in that staid Victorian age who might have survived the attack that awaited him, but it was brought against him with violent suddenness at the moment when he was reaping the highest honours his party could bestow, and he was deposed, like Cæsar's wife, not because of his guilt, but because of his unique and exposed position. He took the advice of his best friend, Chamberlain, and when the divorce case came on, he declined as co-respondent to enter the witness-box—a decision he was bitterly to rue later on. Though he stood well with his best opponents, and counted the Royal Family and Lord Salisbury among his personal friends, there were men against him whom he had made to smart by his very honesty, and there is no mercy from men like these. Angelo in the play, "a man of stricture and firm abstinence," offered no more of a contrast with his fame than Dilke did with the charge thus brought against him, and none who ever knew him will believe that he was guilty. But neither ability nor integrity can prove a negative or reform our justiciary code out of hand, and Dilke went into retirement with only two consolations—a love of work which had survived all his ambitions, and a true-hearted woman who chose to marry him in the worst hour of his fortunes.

To meet Dilke thereafter was to admire the indomitable fortitude of the man. I had more than one conference with him in his study in that dark ancestral house in Sloane Street, and he opened out the stores of his mind with

freedom on politics and literature and passing events. There was no effort, no imposing of the seal of privacy, no questioning of your motive or status—simply the ready confidences of a man of boldness and great experience, willing to set heavy tasks aside in order to lighten the labours of a junior and a stranger. He seemed devoid of pride or misgiving of any sort, and in one case he pointed out a course ahead which had seemed impossible a moment before, owing to converging difficulties, but now seemed the only issue possible. One remembers the equal readiness with which he put the priceless Keats treasures of his family at the disposal of Mr. Buxton Forman, and helped him generously to reap fame as a critic with material obtainable in no other way. The country owes much to Dilke for his influence on journalism as well as upon imperialism, defence, electoral reform, and a multitude of social questions; and it was under a cloud which would have driven other men into commerce or lunacy or golf that he made himself a master of military policy and national defence. He retained most of his friends and all his old zest for personality and eccentricity and wit: that is what makes the second half of his book a veritable mine of clever sayings and arresting anecdotes, most of them relating to men of eminence. The world, knowing the sequel, can derive nothing save benefit from this clear and enlightened narrative of a singular career of promise broken at nearly the topmost sector of the arch. His niece, Miss Tuckwell and Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., have made a deeply human story of it all and told it with grace and conciseness and force. The book could hardly be a better blend of politics and the humanities, and the only supplement it can ever need is proof that Dilke was a deeply wronged and innocent man.

BRIAN PHILLIPS.

THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.*

Mrs. Dudeney has Hardy for a master. "The Head of the Family" is pure pastoral, although it is concerned with the life of a country town. It is a story of primitive passions, into which Sussex hills and skies and woods and pastures are so interwoven that they play their part in the human tragedy as Dorsetshire does in "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and the heath in the "Return of the Native." It is a gripping story. Beausire Fillery is a creation. The elements that go to make up the beginnings of things and the comedy and tragedy of human life are here set against the background of the living and speaking hills. If the primitive passion is sometimes a little plain spoken, well, that is the way of primitive passion; and the unrequited desire of Beausire for William Linkhorn, her snatching at the crumbs (stolen crumbs) from Phœbe Louisa's table, do not repel as they might in the hands of a less sure artist. It belongs to the fields and the hills: it is large and simple: therefore it does not offend. It is in no artificial Arcadia these things happen, that Beausire woos her yokel with a less subtle frankness than Rosalind; that she sits humbly at the feast of wedded happiness of Linkhorn and Phœbe Louisa, that she woos Linkhorn more primitively in the hours when Phœbe Louisa has spurned him, that she glories in her shame, that she accepts an undeserved obloquy for more than twenty years—finally that she discovers her idol to be of clay and marries the Head of the Family. It is a strange story—full-blooded, yet clean because it is natural and primitive. The old town of Lewes is in it as well as the country. Like her master, Mrs. Dudeney has bidden inanimate things to come alive—even Phœbe Louisa's furniture—to play their part in the drama. The lights and shadows are in this book: the magnanimities and the meannesses—the ignoble terror of the deed among the latter—the generosities and the cruelties. She has persuaded us of everything except perhaps, in the case of the present reviewer, one thing. It is hard to believe that Linkhorn and his beard could have excited such passion in Beausire. One cries out against it as one reads. Mrs. Dudeney has put forth her full powers in this Sussex pastoral. It is no common book to be forgotten with the season. It is not of the stuff of popular novels. It is of the books that count.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

* "The Head of the Family." By Mrs. Henry Dudeney. 5s. net. (Methuen.)

TWO FOR DELIGHT.*

Mr. Austin Dobson and Mr. E. V. Lucas may now be described without offence as institutions. We know what to expect of them, and we ask for nothing better than to go on getting the expected. They are some of the excellent people we are sure about. We should feel horribly disconcerted if, some day, we were to drop five shillings into the Lucas slot and pull out an "Eighteenth-century Vignette," or to find ourselves receiving an "England Day by Day" from Mr. Dobson's Hepplewhite cabinet. Mr. Dobson does perhaps surprise us for a moment in the present volume, which we open expecting to find a collection of papers in his well-known manner, and discover to be a commonplace book. The daintiest of commonplace books, be it understood, full of the most charming commonplaces—pages or paragraphs from or about the eighteenth century writers that Mr. Dobson loves so well. Here and there, too, snatches of verse and prose from his own pen. When the first surprise is over you are glad the book is what it is, and not what you expected. It is the book of books for the bookman's bedside. Its choice little bits are just of the right length and the right sort to compose and entertain the mind on its passage from the world of labour to the world of sleep.

What shall we consider to-night in the delightful interval between getting into bed and switching off the light? Well, let us glance at the paragraph recording how Lord Rowton asked Dizzy what he thought the most remarkable, most self-sustained and powerful sentence he knew, and was told, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Whereupon we fall to admiring that sentence and to thinking of other pregnant utterances, wondering, perhaps, what this or that person would have replied to such a question. Then sleep overtakes us, and our dreams are illuminated by sentences outshining Pascal's, which, unfortunately, we always fail to recall in the morning. Or perhaps we light upon the paragraph in which some one says that reading "Clarissa Harlowe" is like an experience—we are not quite the same after we have read it as we were before; and then we wonder what books we should pick out in our own life as experiences, as something that left us altered, a little older, perhaps even a little scared. Perhaps we recall, as a sort of parallel utterance, that excellent moment in Mr. Shaw's "Major Barbara," when Undershaft consoles his Salvationist daughter for the apparent loss of a convert, saying, "Can you strike a man to the heart and leave no mark on him?" And then he explains to her the sadness she feels after her great experience—"You have learnt something; that always feels at first as if you had lost something." Now when (we ask ourselves) have we had from books this sensation of an event, of something that has left us a little weighed upon by a new experience? So we go to sleep with recollections of certain great moments, devoutly thanking all the gods that we have had these moments to recall.

Mr. Dobson naturally does not quote Mr. Shaw. Mr. Dobson "stands upon the ancient ways" and is suspicious of "iconoclasts and anarchists"; though, after all, was there ever a great original artist who wasn't a little of both? Mr. Dobson is also a little austere and aloof. Not so Mr. Lucas, whom one figures always in the opposite arm-chair, chatting to his reader with familiar and unaffected friendliness. Mr. Lucas has an unquenchable curiosity about life. Everything interests him. He is

* "A Bookman's Budget." Composed and compiled by Austin Dobson. 3s. 6d. net. (Oxford University Press.)—"A Boswell of Baghdad." By E. V. Lucas. 5s. net. (Methuen.)

the modern Spectator; but he is always in the scene, never detached from it. He observes all our passing fads and phases, observes them without malice or censure, and communicates his views with disarming amiability. Perhaps, right inside himself, he may be grim, sardonic, saying in solitude the things he doesn't print; but outwardly he is never more than faintly ironic and humorous. His literary attitude is always that of a friend who invites us to share some entertainment he has found. The special pleasure he wishes to communicate on this present occasion is derived from a biographical dictionary compiled in the Middle East during the thirteenth century, an age and clime happily untouched by our modern English passion for aridity in our works of reference. Our way is better than the flowery personalities of Persia? Perhaps; but here we are, seven hundred years after, enjoying the human and humorous touches in Ibn Kallikan's compilation. Do you think that anyone in A.D. 2600 will be enjoying selections from the D.N.B.?

Mr. Lucas passes from his Sage of Baghdad to various diversions in the passing show of 1916, and especially to certain features of the war, upon which he touches with a delicacy and a discretion altogether his own. In fact, the volume is the now familiar Lucas blend of fun, fancy and sentiment, all in the proportions of delight and comeliness. So large is Mr. Lucas's tolerance that he even writes with enthusiasm of Pekinese spaniels. It is the only line in which I cannot follow him. For my part, I cannot like Pekineses, because I love dogs.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD.*

It is well to state clearly at the outset what the title more elusively conveys, namely that this is a volume of short stories. And considering the excellence of these short stories, how compact of mystery and imagination they are, how sure of making a wide and instantaneous appeal, there is no reason why they should not be clearly and confidently labelled as such. They are superbly crisp short stories with an agreeable pungency. "We must watch that we do not make the big fools of ourselves in this affair," says Mr. Mason's vivacious French detective Hanaud in the course of his investigation into "The Affair at the Semiramis Hotel"; and it is precisely this demand for intellectual liveliness on the part of the reader, this need so to speak for a First-of-April wariness, that makes a journey through these pages so thrilling and stimulating an experience. Mystery abounds at every step, dreams assume sinister shapes, the unseen world presses upon us. In the wag of a dog's tail we sense the approach of a spirit; even the tick of a clock is invested with horror. Mr. Mason of course has the dramatic instinct, hence his success in this class of story. He has the stage-manager's gift; it is shown for example in the final scene in "The Crystal Trench," when after twenty-five years the glacier gives up its faithless dead to the waiting widow. Other examples crowd in upon one—the library scene in "The Brown Book," the intensely dramatic situation in the Semiramis Hotel mystery. This last mystery sparkles elusively in a bizarre setting of masked balls, opera singers, drugs and stolen pearls. Not all the tales are as highly coloured as this, but no story is without an ingenious plot, and no plot is without its tense moment. It is safe to say that for a long while to come the short-story epicure will be "discovering" and recommending "The Four Corners of the World."

S. H. W.

A NEW SCOTTISH POET.†

A little volume of "Lyrics from West Lothian," by Isobel W. Hutchison, privately printed last year in aid of the Red Cross Fund, revealed to discerning critics a new poet of rare charm and distinction. Many of these lyrics, reprinted from the *Glasgow Herald*, *Scotsman*, *Westminster Gazette*, and other journals, were exquisite in their artless spontaneity, and full of a simple faith in God and the richness and goodness of Mother Earth. Miss Hutchison's new book, "How Joy was Found," a dramatic poem described as a fantasy in five acts, confirms the promise of this earlier fugitive verse. Though curiously unequal in parts—as, for instance, where the singer descends abruptly from one of her sustained outbursts of lyrical fervour to a line of stark colloquialism—and wilfully rebellious against rules of metre, the result is irresistibly fresh and attractive. Tuning her harp to her own melody she takes an old Highland legend and, like her "Climber," sings

Photo by James Nimmo. **Miss Isobel W. Hutchison.**

because she cannot help but sing. "Life's such a lovely thing!" she cries:

> "The catkin and the willow
> God's chosen for His pillow.
> I wonder why He fashioned
> A Beauty so impassioned;
> I wonder why it matters
> Which way the raindrop patters,
> Or why a God should care
> To give His creatures share
> Of this delightful song. . . ."

Like "Climber," too, she is always looking "for the far-off deeper things that God has tucked behind the violet's wings." She finds God within the violet itself in one striking verse relating how her Climber, the heroine whose adventures in the fairy islands of the outer Hebrides form the main burden of her song, pinned her faith to the most modest of flowers as something that came back after every dreary winter, and seemed each year more lovely than the last:

> "Well, in the spring I came, with joyous thirst,
> To find the violet where I found her first;
> Till, kneeling there one day, I felt my heart
> Quicken and start,
> And pushing back the lid, to look within,
> I saw a thin
> Long tongue of lavender amid the red,
> And God knelt there, and spread
> His strong white hands above the warm, bright stain,
> And laughed, and said: 'I have found faith again
> On earth.'"

The legend itself follows the outline of one of the charming "Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition," which the Rev.

* "The Four Corners of the World." By A. E. W. Mason. 6s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

† "How Joy was Found." By Isobel W. Hutchison. 3s. 6d. net. (Blackie.)

J. M. Macdougall published a good many years ago, but the poet has used the story only as the framework of an original and arresting allegory. The simple lines of the steersman's song in the third act, beginning with :

" I saw above the straining shrouds
No rift nor hint of dawn,
I saw no light beyond the clouds,
But still I carried on. . . ."

seem peculiarly appropriate to the present time, and, like many other passages in a book which is pervaded by a beautiful and ennobling faith, should bring hope and encouragement to many stricken hearts to-day. The right note is also struck by the artistic binding of the book, a word of praise being due to the publishers, in these difficult days, for the excellence of their work throughout.

F. A. M.

Novel Notes.

KNIGHTS OF ARABY. By Marmaduke Pickthall. 6s. (Collins.)

The theme of this book is a warlike feud, and the period chosen by the author for its setting is the fifth Islamic century. King Muarik, the father of King Said and Prince Jayyash, after being defeated at the battle of Zabid, had flown to Dahlak, and there committed suicide. The two brothers are in exile, and would have been destitute had not Jayyash returned in disguise and recovered a considerable sum of money deposited with an adherent. King Said plans to be revenged upon the usurper, Ali-es-Suleyhi, lord of Sanaa, the man who is responsible for their downfall, who has stolen their power, and reduced their sovereign city to a dependency. His methods are treacherous, run counter to the creed of Islam, and do not meet with the approval of Prince Jayyash. But they succeed, and King Said reigns for a brief while in his father's place. His hold upon the people, however, is too slight, and he is ultimately slain by his enemies. Prince Jayyash casts off all earthly majesty, and is left praising the wisdom which has made men pilgrims to an empty house. The life, colour, glory, and passion of the old East will be found in these pages.

GONE TO EARTH. By Mary Webb. 5s. net. (Constable.)

As the author of " The Golden Arrow," Mrs. Mary Webb should be well assured of a warm welcome for its successor. Once more she delineates primitive (and some other) folks against the background of Welsh hills, and does so with a charm and an individuality which go far to atone for much that is unpleasant in her tragic story of Hazel Woodus. Hazel is a child of nature living in a lonely place with her father, harper, keeper of bees and coffin-maker, without any affection for him, or indeed for anything but her pet fox, and with a passionate feeling of resentment against all cruelty and all suffering. In a rage with her father she takes an oath that she'll marry the first man that asks her. Thus it comes about that having inflamed the passion of one Reddin, a " gentleman " farmer—and fled from him, she agrees to marry the minister, Edward Marston. The marriage is doomed to disaster, and Reddin, a survival of mediæval lawlessness, is the agent in that disaster and in the final tragedy when—as is foreshadowed in the title—Hazel dies in seeking to save her pet fox from the pursuing hounds. Somehow the three principals do not impress by their reality, their particular qualities are overstressed, but Marston's mother, Hazel's father and the misogynist Versons are veritable triumphs of character delineation and of rare humour. The author reveals once more, too, a rare literary gift in the manner of the presentation of her story, a manner so fresh and engaging that it makes us regret the more some portions of the matter.

NOBODY'S ISLAND. By Beatrice Grimshaw. 6s. (Hurst & Blackett.)

" Nobody's Island " was tucked away at the back of beyond, somewhere in the Southern Pacific, and despite its name, belonged to Ben Warren, a fine six foot specimen of an Australian. Here he brought his wife Edith, Godfrey Campbell's widow, when she was flying from trial after his death under suspicious circumstances. But the world is proverbially small, and though fame spreads far and wide, notoriety goes farther, and Harold Page, an odious musical prodigy, recognised Edith and wired home to Godfrey Campbell's cousin, who had offered a thousand pounds reward for information. Of course the " hangman's rope did not tighten round Edith's white neck " as Ben might have told her in the beginning, and Captain Campbell who came to curse, stayed to bless, and they all lived happily ever after. Nowadays it is no demerit to a book that its plot is improbable, but even so the chain of coincidence that enabled Ben to raise the false alarm of " man overboard " (it was only Edith's hat), and allowed Edith to put a detective off the trail by clasping a baby to her breast with " mother-love in her eyes," strains the credulity of the staunchest novel-reader, nor is it credible that after cabling home for permission to arrest her, Captain Campbell would have been allowed to let the matter drop. But after all, the main asset of a story is that it has a story to tell, and on this score " Nobody's Island " gains full marks every time.

A CASTLE TO LET. By Mrs. Baillie Reynolds. 6s. net. (Cassell.)

" A Castle To Let " is one of the most enjoyable stories by this author which the present reviewer has read—and that is saying a great deal. Camiola France on coming of age inherits a large fortune and makes up her mind to travel. Circumstances carry her to a remote corner of Transylvania, where she discovers an old castle " to let " and promptly takes possession of it. A weird mystery surrounds the place concerning the inexplicable disappearance of the former lord and a party of friends who were exploring the mountains, and who, it is generally rumoured, were demolished by a hideous prehistoric monster supposed to inhabit a mountain cavern. Camiola decides to solve the mystery, but there are other strange happenings at the castle to be dealt with as well, and whether she succeeds in solving them all, and how the adventure brings her love and happiness, Mrs. Baillie Reynolds tells in that delightful manner which makes her novels so deservedly popular.

THE MAINLAND. By E. L. Grant Watson. 6s. (Duckworth.)

This is a tale of adolescence, of a youth, brought up on a South Sea Island till he was eighteen, and then plunging into the more or less civilised life on the mainland. John Sherwin's character meets the tests of money, women and wine, none of them in particularly clean forms. But a native fibre of soul carries him through, without an entire collapse, and the book ends pleasantly, if somewhat inconsequently, with his marriage to a good, unsophisticated girl. The author has had two things in mind. One, to describe life in the islands, the wild, vigorous existence of pearl-fishers, natives, and merchantmen, as well as of gold-diggers. This is done often with extraordinary skill. There are vivid passages of description, which make the reader pause. On the other hand, there is an inclination to be " risky " in delineating life, especially between the sexes, and the author's artistic taste has not always saved him from erring on this side of things. The story is a study, or series of studies, rather than a rounded off tale. What makes it live is the evident experience which has gone to the writing of some of its chapters.

LORD TONY'S WIFE: An Adventure of the Scarlet Pimpernel. By Baroness Orczy. 6s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

A novel in which that most resourceful, most courageous and super-elusive of heroes known as the Scarlet Pimpernel

appears as one of the principals is sure of a welcome from all lovers of exciting developments and tender romance. Baroness Orczy in this her latest story in which the Pimpernel plays his part as the god in the machine will be found not to have disappointed the anticipations of her readers, either in the matter of tender romance or that of exciting developments. Even the readers with fullest knowledge of the ways of story-tellers will feel a pleasant thrill of surprise when they realise the guise in which the Pimpernel makes his first appearance on the scene for the saving of the young lady who was to be Lord Tony's wife from the machinations of her enemy. The romantic sense will certainly be well satisfied by the story of the way in which that same young lady becomes the wife of Lord Tony only to be kidnapped, with her father's cognizance, and carried off from the neighbourhood of Bath to Nantes and the days of the butchery of 1793. Then follow exciting series of adventures of her distracted husband and his wonderful friend. It is a spirited story of hurried action in which the reader may for three or four pleasant hours "lose" himself from the worries of actuality.

THE DEEP HEART. By Isabel Clark. 6s. (Hutchinson.)

In "The Deep Heart" we have another fine novel by Miss Isabel Clark. Like her previous work this is a Roman Catholic story, and one so cleverly told that the purpose never overshadows the plot, nor does the very great interest of the story ever once dwarf the greatness of the purpose. Justin Mellor, a self-satisfied young man with atheistic views, buys a villa near Naples from Averil Waring, who, on her mother's death, is forced to sell her beloved Italian home. Later, when Averil, who is a Catholic, is adopted by a beautiful if rather unconvincing princess with a husband permanently in Russia and a mysterious past, she and Justin become neighbours. He introduces to her his friend Peter Clutter, an author, who, in addition to being also a Catholic and a thoroughly "good sort," straightway falls in love with Averil. The jealousy of Justin keeps these two apart, until among the traditions of Italy and by the power of her ancient faith, he is brought to see clearly his own despicable nature, and to realise the goodness of others, who, until then, he had not been able to appreciate. In making reparation he brings a happy ending to a story which provides excellent reading and surrounds the reader with a wondrous atmosphere of Italy.

CAPTAIN GAULT. By W. Hope Hodgson. 5s. net. (Eveleigh Nash.)

The Hope Hodgson we are used to is the writer of eerily imaginative tales of the sea, such as "The Boats of the 'Glen Carrig,'" or of bizarre stories of fantasy, such as "The Night Land"; but in "Captain Gault" we have Mr. Hodgson in a new vein, a lighter vein than we have ever met him in before. This romance, or series of romances, in which Captain Gault plays always a leading part, is as fresh and deft and blithe a thing of the kind as we have had for a long while, and fully deserves the description of it on the wrapper as "a cheerful tale for the front." Gault is a sea-captain, susceptible to feminine charm, but so far distrustful of all women that even when he seems to be most entangled in their wiles he is invariably shrewd enough to have left himself a loophole of escape. He adds to his income by assisting his passengers from time to time in the smuggling of diamonds past the customs; sometimes he is gallant enough to help a lady in this lawlessness for the sheer love of the excitement and without reward; sometimes he does a profitable little transaction of the kind wholly on his own account. He is more than suspected by the authorities, but his ingenuity is unfailing; when it comes to a battle of wits between himself and the acutest detectives, male or female, he wins unexpectedly every time, usually after his defeat has seemed inevitable. The two best stories perhaps are "The Case of the Curio Dealer" and "The Adventure of the Garter," but they are all delightfully ingenious, full of life and surprises, and thoroughly enjoyable reading.

GINGER AND McGLUSKY. By A. G. Hales. 5s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

The fourth of the McGlusky books, and those who are already familiar with the sayings and doings of the valiant and amusing Scot, as well as those who are making his acquaintance for the first time, will welcome this chronicle of high adventure. McGlusky and his comrade in arms, Ginger, the little Irishman, are vivid, full-blooded creations; here they join a Colonial regiment in Flanders and pass through nearly every variety of strange experience. The action is swift, for McGlusky is a human cyclone, bringing trouble—mostly to others—in his train. As might be expected he quickens things up on his particular section of the line. His brief career as an airman is a huge success, ending rather disastrously, and his capture by the Germans and subsequent escape make capital reading. The minor characters are as real as the two principals—Murrimbidgee, the gambler, and the Padre, in particular, being amongst Mr. Hales's happiest efforts. For excitement and forceful writing this narrative will be hard to beat. The author has a peculiar gift for describing fighting and fighting-men, and is perfectly at home when dealing with his gallant, hard-bitten, unconventional countrymen.

The Bookman's Table.

TOMMY'S TUNES. By F. T. Nettleingham, 2nd Lieut., B.E.F. 2s. 6d. net. (Erskine Macdonald.)

One thing most of us have realised for long past is that soldiers do not sing well written patriotic songs about fighting bravely for victory and dying gloriously. These are written by civilians and sung by civilians while the soldiers are doing the work. The soldiers themselves take a very different view of the matter; they evolve their own songs, fitting them to old song or hymn tunes or supplying them with simple, catchy airs of their own invention. It should be possible to trace some of their authors, but on the whole they remain authorless—as if they were spontaneous emanations from the regiment or the army whose feelings and sentiments they not so much express as relieve. Lieutenant Nettleingham has done good service in collecting and annotating ninety-seven of these songs, some slightly altered to render them printable, and the key-note of them all is humour—they are nonsensical,

Lieutenant F. T. Nettleingham.

irresponsibly lively, quaintly or grimly satirical, lugubriously funny, and if now and then there is a suspicion of seriousness it is masked in a grin. "It is a peculiarity of British humour," says the compiler, "to be derogatory to its own dignity, to wipe itself in the mud, to affect self-satire to an alarming extent. Yet woe betide any foreigner who dares to opine we're not what we think we are. The spirit really evinced by these songs, in spite of their oft-times derogatory purport, is that of a lofty cynicism and a confirmed fatalism, but real, thick, unadulterated sarcasm—never." It is a capital anthology, and though it may shock people who take themselves and their patriotism too seriously, it will delight all who have any understanding of English character and help them perhaps to a better comprehension of it. Some of the songs here are traditional songs of the army dating back to Waterloo and beyond that; most of them are the outcome of the present war, and those relating to the aircraft service—one or two of these are among the best of the lot—are as much in the traditional vein and as full of character as any.

GREEK IDEALS. By C. Delisle Burns. 5s. net. (Bell.)

It happens occasionally that a detached sentence, external to the subject at large, will offer a key unawares to an author's point of view and will explain at once its adoption. This is the case with Mr. Burns' latest and not inconsiderable volume. He observes that, taken at its best, the contemplative life of the mediæval monk "meant a concentration upon a few inherited metaphysical ideas or a continuous enthusiasm for a delightful but imaginary situation." Such is his conception of Aquinas—that "monk" and Angel of the Schools who said that "contemplation is love"—of Ruysbroech, of Eckehart and Tauler, not to speak at an earlier period of Erigena Johannes—enlarging on the mystical theology of pseudo-Dionysius—or at a later day of *Theologia Germanica*, of John of the Cross and Teresa. The question is not for our debating: we have established the point of view. It follows that in the present work Mr. Burns has set himself to expound Greek ideals from a purely sociological basis. When in pages that are memorable within their own measures he pictures the active and living participation of free Athenians in the ceremonial religion of Athens, that which escapes is the consciousness of a life in religion: it is swallowed up in civic consciousness, and yet it existed in Greece. When he passes from public offices to those of the Greek Mysteries, they are still a collective consequence of a collective life; there is no room in them at any portal or within any sanctuary for "the mystic citizen of an eternal kingdom." When he enters upon the Rites of Eleusis, their pageant of death and resurrection offers nothing to the life of the soul. They are a "magnificent social experience," though he knows that they administered high consolation at the gate of death itself, in "the hope of eternity." There is something wrong, as we think, with the standpoint, and we prefer to believe with Aristotle that those who "saw" at Eleusis were "changed for the rest of their lives," which change belongs to the matter of individual and inward, not of social life. We know also that there is an essence and spirit of Plato which is not to be found by a writer for whom Plotinus and Platonic successors stand for an "evil tradition." It remains to be said that Mr. Burns' study is distinguished by that subtle intimacy which signifies wide experience with sources in Greek literature and history, while that aspect of learning which is the collector's faculty for facts appears nowhere.

VERSES. By John Edward Logan ("Barry Dane"). $1.25. (Pen and Pencil Club, Montreal.)

The many lovers of Canadian poetry who admired the work of "Barry Dane" will be glad of this opportunity of obtaining in one volume the collection of practically the whole of his poetical works. The book has been published, after its author's death, by the Pen and Pencil Club of Montreal, of which club John Edward Logan was a valued member. The verses show their author in moods grave and gay, but always the same kindly sympathy and unaffectedness are visible throughout; and it is this spirit that gives the book an unusual charm of its own. Among the verses and sonnets there are three dialect poems, one of which, "The Critic of the Pilot Mound," contains a neat little piece of philosophy which ends:

"Be keerful, a-huntin' fer little parts,
That they don't so fill yer soul,
That it won't hev room when yer finished,
To take in the mighty whole."

THE DEVOUT LADY: A STUDY IN FOUR CENTURIES. By Mary J. H. Skrine. 5s. net. (Constable.)

This collection of studies is described by their author as "half biographical, wholly meditative," and we are, not without some cause, asked not to conclude from the title that it is merely "some little pious book." No reader even of the most casual kind will linger under that impression. For it is a book both wise and humorous, and full of charity and serenity. Mrs. Skrine casts her net widely as becomes her broad-minded definition of her subject. "The Devout Lady has dwelt from of old, and still dwells, in peaceful houses set in quiet, ancient English towns; amid untrodden country ways; under the black smoke-pall of airless slums; in busy London streets close to the beating of the great heart of England. She may be an aristocrat of the aristocrats, or one of such a woman's young servants; the busy worker . . . or some silent woman in a Highland cottage or on an invalid couch. . . . In certain fundamental details, whoever she be, she is the same; in the quiet strength born of a detached purpose and outlook; in some inevitable limitations of the saint; in a personal scheme of life-values, that never shifts, if differing with her type; in the still vision of eyes ever looking to

"The great emprize,
The deeds of after death."

This is finely said, and a true index to the engrossing and delicately fashioned essays that follow, ranging from the sisters of Little Gidding to Charlotte Yonge. The author's style is a signal instance of what used to be called literary decorum or propriety. Its fineness and quietness are in perfect keeping with the theme.

RUNNING FIRES. By Evangeline Ryves. 2s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

This is a homely little book, embracing within its slender covers plays, poems and sketches. The greatest appeal is made by the sketches, which are divided into "Polish Fantasias" and "By the Waters of Litwa," and each is endowed with a very real atmosphere. The "Polish Fantasias" remain with one long after reading, and in "All Souls" the unfound graves of the patriots refuse to be forgotten. In all the sketches there is a great play of light and shade, and Miss Ryves has been happy in capturing just those essentials that are necessary to create atmosphere. Much of the poetry too shows merit, marred at times by a self-consciousness of phrasing. Often she is original quite naturally, as in "You Have Forgotten, But Your Face Remembers." Of all the poems "A Wild Church" seems the easiest and most inspired, with a ring of ecstasy that is quite refreshing. It is rather a pity when, for the sake of rhyme, she writes such things as:

". . . a few have strove,
To seek it by the ways of Love."

Much thought has gone to the making of the four little plays, and each one touches life at some vital point. The workmanship is artistic, and the dialogue for the most part simple and natural. Taken as a whole this little volume shows great versatility and a keen interest in life.

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THE BOOKMAN

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